

John Black Feather



THE INDEPENDENT

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Take my bones from London and bury them at Wounded Knee



John Black Feather, a great grandson of Long Wolf, bedecked in an eagle feather headdress, stands watch in Brompton cemetery, west London, as the American Indian's remains are exhumed

Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

An American Indian's dying wish that his body be returned to his tribal homeland is being granted more than a century later.
Yesterday a colourful band of his relatives from several generations of the Oglala Sioux nation gathered in Brompton Cemetery, west London, to collect his remains and take them home so his spirit can finally rest. Who was Long Wolf, asks Clare Gorme, and why was he buried in London?

The tragic tale of how Long Wolf went to London and never came home is legendary among members of the Oglala Sioux nation. Now, more than a century later, this modern folk story has found a happy ending.

Long Wolf was among the warriors who wiped out General Custer's 7th Cavalry at the battle of Little Big Horn in 1876. Retribution from the US forces was swift and the Sioux suffered a shattering defeat. Rather than be rounded up with other survivors, Long Wolf decided to enlist in Colonel "Buffalo Bill" Cody's Wild West Show.

The show, which re-enacted Indian fights, stage coach robberies and buffalo

hunts, was a runaway success across the US and Europe, and the audience at the Earls Court Arena included Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales.

But Long Wolf, then 59, was ailing and, realising his death was imminent, he drew a picture of a wolf and asked for it to be carved on his gravestone. Now, 105 years later, that wolf image still survives. In fact, it turned out to be the vital clue when Elizabeth Knight, a housewife from Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, set out six years ago to trace his grave.

When Mrs Knight picked up a dog-eared book in a local antiques market and read a lament on Long Wolf's tragic life and burial, she was so touched that she felt

she "just had to do something". Having located his grave, neglected in a lone corner of the crowded cemetery, she set about tracing his descendants. With the help of George Georges, the founder of Britain's own American Indian Support Group, Twin Light Trail, she traced Long Wolf's great-grandchildren and discovered that among his own people he was far from forgotten.

In 1993, John Black Feather, 60, a great-grandson of Long Wolf, responded to an advertisement placed by Mrs Knight in a South Dakota newspaper. He was anxious to assist – for "Medicine Men and Holy Men say that the spirit doesn't rest until the body is brought home."

Yesterday, bedecked in an eagle feather headdress and beaded slippers, he stood in Brompton Cemetery, west London, and spoke of his happiness. "I've been hearing about Long Wolf since I was a little boy. It's sort of like a fairytale story. He's someone I never knew, but my mum talked about – and here I am 60 years later."

His mother, Jessie Black Feather, 87, is Long Wolf's most senior surviving descendant. She has always wanted to find her grandfather, but had never known where to begin. Her mother, Lizzie Long Wolf, was 12 years old when Long Wolf was performing in London. She heard him say, as he lay dying of pneumonia, how much he yearned to go home. And now he is.

Generations of relatives, as well as a Medicine Man named Wilmer Mesteth, have flown to Britain to oversee the exhumation of their ancestral chief, as well as those of his 17-month-old daughter, Star Ghost Dog, who was buried with him.

The remains will be taken back home to the Black Hills of Dakota, where they will be wrapped in buffalo hide and laid to rest in his ancestral burial ground, on the open plains of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, Wounded Knee.

Yesterday they gathered near his grave-side to sing songs: "Takala kun miye ca/ obitie wauw kun/wana hemamla yelo" ("My people, take courage/ a warrior I have been/ Now I am no more").

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TODAY'S NEWS

Next: face transplants

A breakthrough in transplant surgery was heralded after an extraordinary operation in Melbourne, Australia. Two teams of surgeons spent 25 hours replacing the face and scalp of a woman who had been caught in a milking machine. The surgeon, a world leader in the field, said it was a dry-run for transplanting whole human faces. Page 3

Tony Pandy dies at 88

The 'voice of Westminster' fell silent last night with the death from cancer of Lord Tony Pandy, the Commons Speaker George Thomas. He stayed active to the end, campaigning in last week's Welsh 'no' campaign. Obituaries, page 19

Labour will outlaw 'vote buying' in Britain

The Government has decided to curb the millions which political parties can spend on elections, Anthony Bevins, Political Editor reveals. Will this cut back the acres of advertising and the long campaigns voters have to suffer? Or is it a ruthless attack by Labour on a Conservative Party already on its knees?

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, is preparing a dramatic change in the rules governing British elections, including the compulsory registration of parties. The changes could mean more restrained campaigns here, and would also ensure that British voters never endure the huge propaganda efforts pumped out by, for instance, US political parties and candidates.

In the weeks running up to the May election, the Conservatives spent £20m, Labour went through £13m and the Liberal Democrats spent £3m on their national publicity drives. A Labour spokesman said yesterday: "This thing just spirals and spirals; the parties spend and spend and spend again. It is madness."

It is thought that if a ceiling had been imposed on national election budgets in May, it would have been based on a limit of between £5m and £10m, ensuring that Labour and the Tories faced each other on a level playing field.

There is also a strong suspicion at Westminster that Tony Blair is keen to end the charge that New Labour is dancing to the unions' tune because of its reliance on the unions' elections contributions. So there is party advantage in this too. Because Labour has less access to business finance

than the Conservatives, it has a vested interest in introducing curbs on spending. The introduction of proportional representation for the European Parliamentary elections in 1999 is being used for the revision of electoral rules, including a ban on candidates standing on misleading labels – like "Literal Democrat" – as well as the cap on election spending.

Mr Straw believes that current restraint on election spending is out of date, because it came into force at a time when most cash was invested in local, constituency-based efforts. That is why there are fixed limits on individual candidates' spending.

"We did not have the mass media, even the poster signs that we now have," Mr Straw had told the Commons Home Affairs Select Committee. "There was less use made of the media that existed. There is a need to modernise our approach to election spending."

The Government is already committed to enacting legislation obliging parties to declare the source of all donations above a minimum figure of about £5,000, along with a ban on foreign funding.

But in a memorandum to the select committee, Mr Straw now says: "If a regional list system is to be introduced for elections to the European Parliament, there will need to be new rules governing electoral expenditure, since the emphasis will be much more on the promotion of parties rather than individual candidates."

"Any examination of the rules governing election expenses could also cover the possibility of imposing limits on expenditure at the national level by political parties."

Lord Holme, the Liberal Democrats' election campaign manager, told *The Independent* at his party's conference in

Eastbourne yesterday: "We shouldn't say that everyone has to be as poor as us. But the amounts that were spent this year come as close as you can get to buying votes."

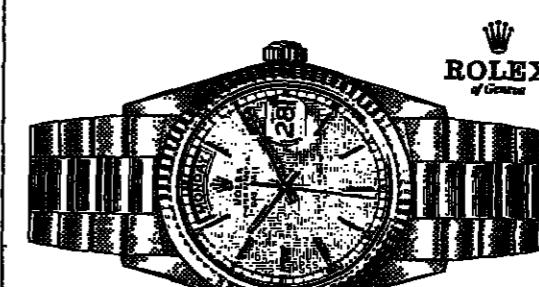
The big expense in national propaganda campaigns is for posters put up on advertising hoardings across the country, with additional money going on newspaper advertising, and seductive election broadcasts.

Mr Straw also says in his memorandum that proportional representation for the European parliamentary elections, the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly, will require the registration of political parties, because the system to be used requires parties to offer election lists of approved candidates. He plans to use the registration process to filter out spurious parties designed to deceive and mislead the voters.

All parties – and many voters – have suffered from the activities of such candidates. In the 1994 European elections, Adrian Saunders, now Liberal Democrat for Torbay, was defeated by 700 votes after a candidate put himself forward as a Literal Democrat in Devon & Plymouth East. A legal challenge by the Liberal Democrats was rejected.

In Hackney South and Shoreditch, where Brian Sedgmore was defending a solid Labour majority, a New Labour candidate received 2,436 votes – an astonishing 7.2 per cent of votes cast – and many people complained after voting for him that they had been deceived.

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History made as surgeons transplant a woman's face

One of the world's leading plastic surgeons has successfully reattached a woman's face after it was torn from her head in a horrific accident. Prof Wayne Morrison said he considered the operation a dry run for face transplants.

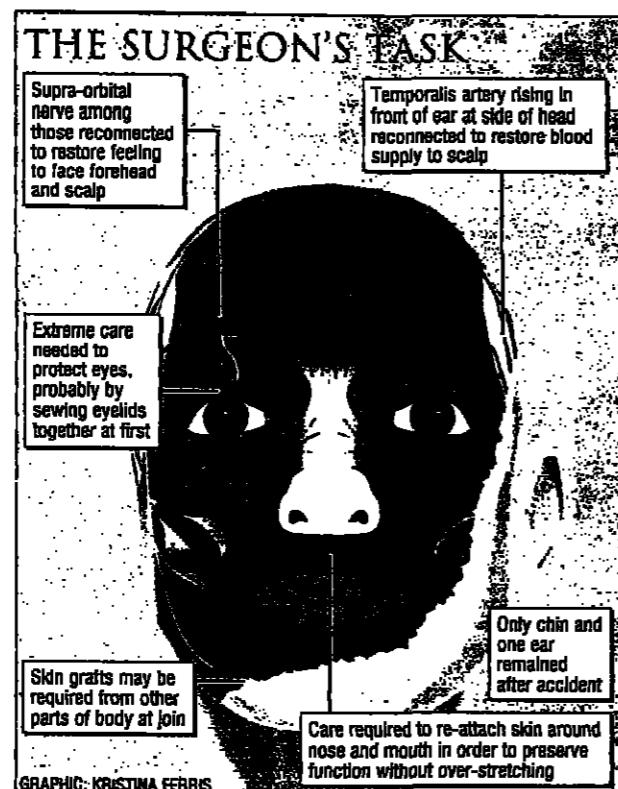
Jeremy Laurance, Health Editor, thinks the operation could open a new era in transplant surgery.

Two teams of surgeons spent 25 hours replacing the face, scalp and one ear of the woman.

Professor Morrison, who led the surgery at the renowned St Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne, Australia, said that the day might come when major trauma victims left hospital with someone else's face. "This is a dry run for actually transplanting faces. This is what we could only dream we could do," he said.

The 28-year-old woman's appalling injuries, described by Mr Morrison as the worst he had seen, were sustained after the skin of her face and scalp were ripped off like a glove after her hair became caught in a milking machine on a dairy farm in the state of Victoria, leaving only her chin and one ear intact.

She was found by a friend, who would have been confronted by a sight like an



anatomical dissection, Mr Morrison said. His face and scalp were packed in ice and taken with her to the hospital which has pioneered the use of microsurgery. There, surgeons using microscopes reattached blood vessels and nerves using tiny stitches finer than a human hair.

The surgeons worked from 10pm last Tuesday, hours after the accident happened, until 11pm the following day. Yesterday, six days after the accident, the woman was still in intensive care under heavy sedation, but Mr Morrison said he was "fairly confident" that all

the face would survive. He said he knew of only one comparable operation performed before, several years ago in China.

Describing the case to reporters, Mr Morrison compared it to the movie *Face/Off* now playing in Australia and due to open in Britain. *Face/Off* is a violent action thriller starring John Travolta and Nicholas Cage as enemies whose faces are swapped by surgeons.

However, Mr Morrison admitted that there were still formidable problems of rejection to be overcome. The skin is the most immunologically resistant organ in the body - it provokes

a more violent response than a heart or kidney when transplanted into another body.

Although immunosuppressant drugs could be given to prevent rejection, their long-term effects are thought too risky except in cases such as heart and kidney transplants where death is likely without a transplant.

Stewart Watson, consultant plastic surgeon at Withington Hospital, Manchester, and an expert on the care of accident victims, has treated war wounded in Bosnia and earthquake survivors in Armenia and Iran. He said the injuries suffered by the woman were unique. "The scalp is vulnerable to 'de-gloving' where the skin comes off but I have never heard of a case like this involving the face as well."

Once the graft had taken and the blood supply had been re-established the biggest problem facing the surgeons would be to restore feeling to the face and to ensure the proper functioning of the eyelids and mouth. "They will need to take extreme care to protect the eyes, probably by sewing the eyelids together initially. Getting good eyelid function will be one of the major challenges as well as dealing with the junction of the skin at the nose and mouth so that it is not overstretched," he said.

Surgeons at St Vincent's hospital said the woman may be able to go home within two weeks. Mr Morrison said she would have scars around her eyelids and chin but would be recognisably the same person. "She will have animation of her face and the essential characteristics will be there," he said.



Josie Russell: Watched the identity parade through a one-way screen Fiona Hansen

KEY TO TOMORROW'S COSMETIC SURGERY

Today's science fiction is tomorrow's cosmetic surgery. The suggestion that face transplants could become a reality raises the prospect of the ageing rich raiding the cadavers of beautiful 30-year-old accident victims for a youthful new look.

Just as the extraordinary techniques developed 50 years ago by Sir Harold Gillies, the father of plastic surgery, for treating badly burnt Second World War bomber pilots have metamorphosed into nips and tucks for the pampered rich, so new methods being developed for today's accident victims may find a place in the beauty salons of the 21st century.

Could Cindy Jackson, 42, who underwent 27 operations at a cost of £60,000 have saved herself the trouble with a single face transplant?

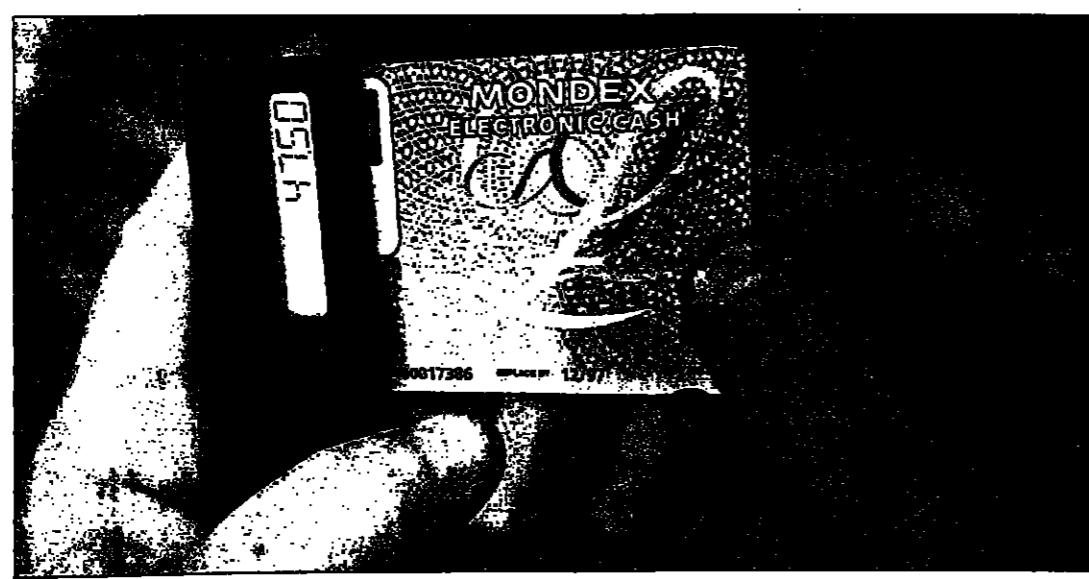
Although face transplants are technically possible, their introduction is held up by problems of rejection. Powerful immunosuppressant drugs are not justified for non-life-threatening conditions and even disciples of self-improvement such as Ms Jackson would draw the line at taking potentially toxic doses.

James Frame, consultant plastic surgeon at St Andrew's hospital, Essex, who has been doing research in the area for four years, said: "What the transplant world is waiting for is a way of overcoming the rejection problem without drugs." The best candidate is "transfection" - a method of transferring genes to the new tissue, using a virus as a carrier to "infect" it, ensuring that it is accepted by the recipient of the transplant.

Mr Frame said the first candidates for a face transplant, were it to become possible, would be cancer patients. "If someone has surgery for cancer of the mouth the best we can do for them is lift a section of skin from their back and transfer it to their face. The results are not very good. I feel as a cosmetic surgeon we ought to be able to offer them something better."

But creating a new look for the vain would be more difficult than replacing skin and underlying tissue with someone else's face. Mr Frame said: "It can't be done. The skeleton would still be there. Because of that basic background, whatever you put over the top you would still be left with the same individual."

— Jeremy Laurance



The tally on a Mondex card is checked using a personal scanner

Virtual cash, straight to your mobile phone

'E-cash', which stores money as digits on smart cards, could soon make credit and debit cards look outdated. It is already used in Swindon, and Charles Arthur, Science Editor, says it could soon come to a mobile phone near you.

If visiting the cash machine is costing too much effort - the walking the queues, and the risk that it may have run out of cash - then help is on the way. Getting your hands on some money could soon require nothing more than dialling a few digits on your mobile phone - where money will be sent direct.

Cellnet, the mobile phone

company, has teamed up with the "smart card" payments company Mondex International to develop a system that will let you withdraw cash in the form of encrypted strings of digits, directly from your bank account, and store it on a computer chip slotted into the back of a mobile phone. That can then be used with a suitable card reader to pay for items costing from 1p upwards.

Any of Cellnet's 1.4 million customers with a digital GSM phone could use the system, which could also be used to deposit cash. The greatest benefit would be for getting money for transactions of £5 or less, which are too expensive to carry out with credit or debit cards. When a transaction takes place, a complex calculation takes place and the digits on the buyer's card are de-incremented. Cell-

net admitted that "any forward-looking mobile phone company would examine this area."

Today's announcement extends Mondex's pilot project which started in July 1995 in Swindon. There, "smart cards" - credit cards with an embedded microprocessor - were introduced for use by the general public. Though the initial reaction was lukewarm, other Mondex projects have followed in the UK and other countries. By the end of this year Mondex expects to have produced more than a million reloadable "e-cash" cards.

Earlier this year the credit card company Mastercard bought 51 per cent of Mondex, and both Mastercard and its competitor Visa have begun issuing "stored value" credit cards which contain electronic cash.

Josie attends identity parade

Josie Russell, the schoolgirl who survived the Kent murder of her mother and sister which shocked the country last summer, has recovered enough to attend an ID parade. Police believe they may be on the verge of a breakthrough says Kate Watson-Smyth.

Kent Police would not reveal the results of the identity parade but a spokesman said yesterday that they were now consulting with the Crown Prosecution Service.

Josie was persuaded to attend the parade at Rainham police station at the weekend by police investigating the murder of her mother Lin and six-year-old sister, Megan. They were murdered as they walked home from school in Chilenden, Kent, 14 months ago. During the attack in a narrow country lane Josie, 10, suffered appalling head injuries after being beaten with a hammer.

A Kent Police spokesman said yesterday: "We can confirm that an identity parade did take place. We are now consulting with the Crown Prosecution Service following that identity parade."

It is understood Josie was accompanied by her father, Dr Shaun Russell, as she was driven from her home in North Wales to Rainham. Dr Russell, a former university lecturer, comforted his daughter as she watched the parade, which included the possible killer, from behind a one-way glass screen.

One of the nine men in the parade had previously been questioned by police about the attack before being released.

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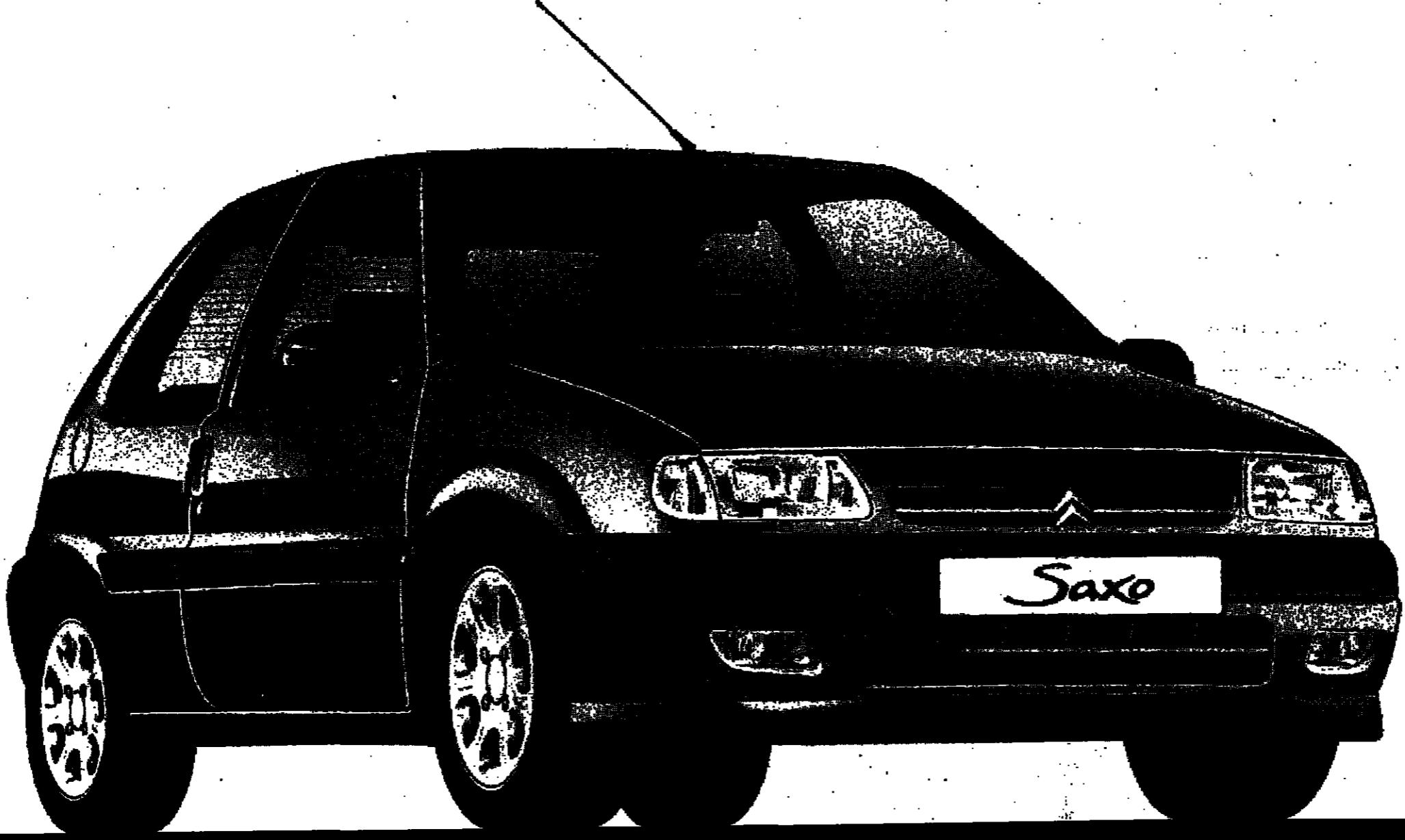
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Exclusions are state-sanctioned truancy, says charity



Dathan Fraser-Matthews, one of the children at Trinity St Mary's primary school who is taking part in the Shine project. Photograph: Kalpesh Lathigra

'She showed him how to deal with his anger – they made toys which he could smash'

When Adrian Thompson was eight, his mother, Shirley, received a letter from his school saying that he was in danger of being excluded unless his behaviour improved.

Now Adrian is ten and, his mother says, he is still in school thanks to the help he has received from the Children's Society's Shine project (Schools Have Inclusive Education).

She says: "He was on the verge of being excluded for difficult behaviour. He was very hyperactive and he kept throwing things across the classroom. He was also being bullied and, every time something went wrong, he felt that he was blamed for it.

"But he didn't know how to express himself. When I asked, he said he was fine."

His behaviour problems meant that he was also struggling with his work.

Part of the trouble, Mrs Thompson says, is that she is a nurse working night shifts so that she was not always available when Adrian came home from school.

"I was frightened about what would happen when he went back into class but there has been no problem. He has learned to read and he now likes school.

"I don't know what we would have done without the help. There needs to be a system so that parents and teachers get together and communicate properly."

— Judith Judd

enjoyed his one-to-one sessions with Jill each week. "He felt someone was interested in him and that gave him confidence," his mother said. "She showed him how to deal with his anger. They made toys which he could smash.

"I was frightened about what would happen when he went back into class but there has been no problem. He has learned to read and he now likes school.

"I don't know what we would have done without the help. There needs to be a system so that parents and teachers get together and communicate properly."

— Judith Judd

University scholarships take pain out of tuition fees

As sixth formers begin preparing university applications for next year, one institution is launching £1,000 scholarships to tempt prospective candidates. Since would-be students are now facing the costly prospect of tuition fees and the abolition of grants, the offer could mark the start of a trend, writes Lucy Ward, Education Correspondent

eight departments from English to engineering will each offer a £1,000 scholarship, to be awarded by competition based on an essay, project or assignment.

The sum, payable in three instalments during the undergraduate year, exactly covers the maximum amount students will be expected to pay annually for tuition under plans announced by the Government in July.

Charges will be means tested according to parental income, and about one-third of students will be liable for the full amount, while a further third pay nothing and the rest are charged on a sliding scale.

Bangor's academic registrar David Roberts said that, at a time when students were increasingly worried about their finances, the scholarships were expected to be "extremely attractive" to applicants.

The offer also represents a useful marketing tactic at a time when universities fear a rush for the last free higher education places this year and initial warnings over fees could mean few-

er applications for next September.

The applications process for 1998 entry has already begun, but the Government has not yet spelt out the detail of its fees proposals.

At a conference of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals last week, the higher education minister Baroness Blackstone promised an announcement within a fortnight, but universities fear some questions could remain unanswered until later in the autumn, when many applications will have already been made.

Dr Geoffrey Copland, vice-chancellor of the University of Westminster and chair of the 26-strong Coalition of Modern Universities, an organisation representing many of the former polytechnics, said many institutions were considering offering scholarships and bursaries but could not act without more detail on fees.

He said: "There is a real concern among CMU and I think widely that there may be students who will be deterred from taking up places."

Students applying to the University of Wales, Bangor, have the chance to win the equivalent of a year's tuition fee under a new scholarship scheme.

The university launched the offer, which it plans to extend next year, as it emerged that other institutions are also considering similar moves amid fears that tuition charges being introduced next September could deter potential students.

Under the Bangor scheme,

THE DAILY POEM

Speak to Me

by Selina Hill

I'm going to stop.

I'm going to start again.
I'm going to make strategic little piles
of things like cigarettes and sugar-cubes,
and bananas' eggs, and cubes of cuttle-cake,
and range them, along your route.

until you notice them;
and then I'm going to balance
slightly larger things,
like fish, or fruit, or tulips, on my head,
whispering as I walk: Speak to me,
whispering. Speak to me please

This week's poems come from *Beyond Bedlam* (Anvil Press, £7.95). An anthology of work "written out of mental distress", it has been edited by Ken Smith and Matthew Sweeney to mark the 750th anniversary of the Bethlem Royal and Maudsley hospitals; proceeds from the volume go to three mental health charities. Selina Hill's poem first appeared in *A Little Book of Me* (Bloodaxe).



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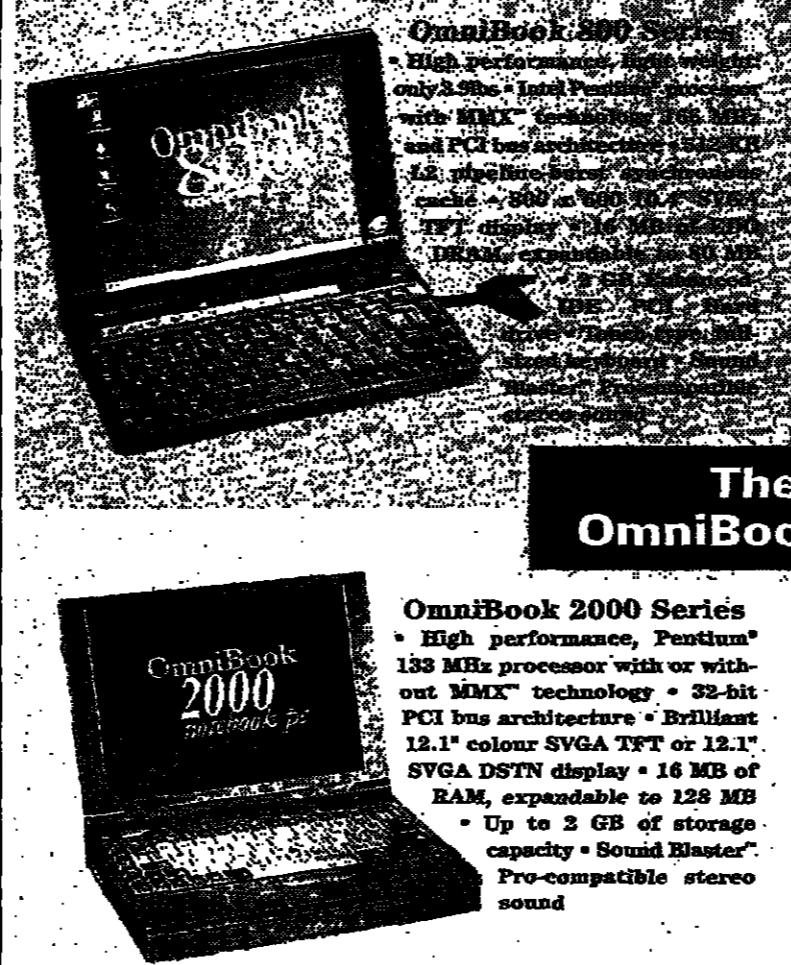
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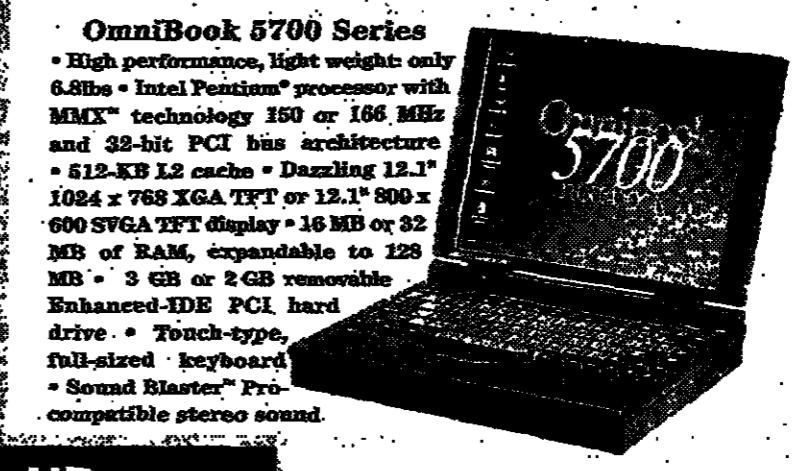
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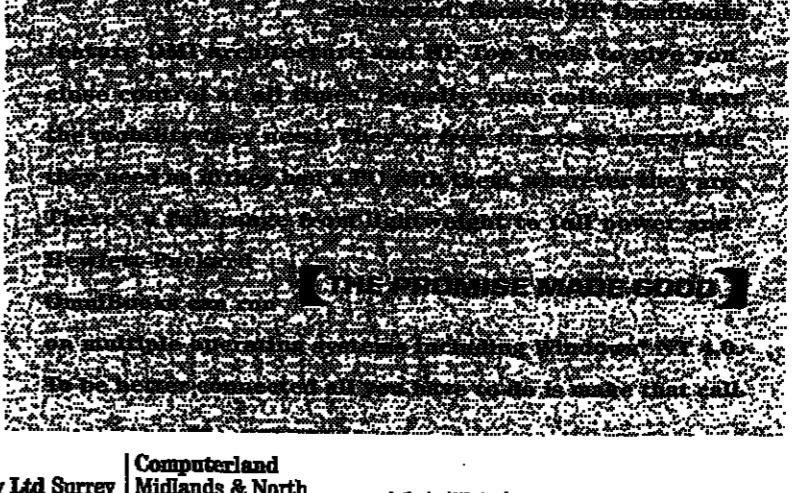
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school thinking about how exclusions can be reduced.

Ms Brenner said: "These schools show that, with outside support and the commitment of schools, parents, pupils, children who might otherwise be excluded can be given a real chance. If you're excluded at the age of five, what hope does that give a child for the rest of its life? The national figures for black children, particularly those from Afro-Caribbean backgrounds, are inexcusable."

Afro-Caribbean pupils are four times more likely to be excluded from school than other children.

Ian Sparks, the society's chief executive, said that exclusions amounted to "state-sanctioned truancy. While the Government has announced some welcome plans to tackle truancy, we want to see more work on preventing exclusions. The statistics are a shambles. No one knows how many children are excluded temporarily and there's even doubt about the figures on permanent exclusions."

For children in difficulties, he said, it was a frighteningly short route from primary school to prison. A recent Audit Commission report found that 78 per cent of permanently excluded pupils and 31 per cent of those temporarily excluded committed crimes.

Poland's revolutionaries celebrate a comeback

Solidarity is set to gain power again after a surprisingly clear victory over the reformed Communists. The price may be a bigger dose of free market medicine than they would like.

Vowing to complete the revolution of 1989, leaders of the disparate strands of Solidarity celebrated their comeback to the centre-stage of Polish politics yesterday and began the arduous task of putting together the next government.

After Solidarity's stunning victory in Sunday's general elections, the right is on the verge

of power. According to projections, the Solidarity Election Action block, with about 34 per cent of the votes, will be the biggest party in the new *sejm* (parliament). Prime Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz's former Communists scored a creditable 27 per cent, but their coalition partners, the Peasants' Party, won only about 7 per cent of the votes. If the projections are correct, the left cannot cobble together a majority.

On the right, matters have been simplified by the failure of fringe parties to gain a foothold. Freedom Union, the liberal wing of Solidarity of old, was forecast to win 14 per cent of the votes. When these are translated into seats, Solidarity will be able to form a government with the liberals of Freedom Union.



Lech Wałęsa (right) and Solidarity chairman Marian Krzaklewski welcoming the first exit polls on Sunday
Photograph: Czarek Sokolowski

Lech Wałęsa (right) and Solidarity chairman Marian Krzaklewski welcoming the first exit polls on Sunday

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Hard men and fascists triumph in Serbian vote

Slobodan Milošević, the great survivor of Serbian politics, again proved yesterday that "defeat" is not a phrase that fits easily into his political vocabulary. Preliminary results from parliamentary and presidential elections suggested severe losses for the democrats, who only eight months ago were both strong and united. Steve Crawshaw says the biggest gainer in the elections was a quasi-fascist opposition candidate.

Mr Milošević's favoured candidate to be Serbian president looked set to gain around 35 per cent of the vote; the candidate of the far right, Vojislav Seselj, came second with about 30 per cent; Vuk Drasković, one of a troika of leaders who spearheaded opposition demonstrations earlier this year, came third, with about 20 per cent. Opposition parties which had called for a boycott of the polls were disappointed that voters failed to respond in sufficient numbers. The turnout was around 60 per cent, comfortably over the 50 per cent minimum.

Mr Milošević, who served the maximum two terms as Serbian president, has stayed at the top by moving recently to become the leader of Yugoslavia (which now consists of Serbia and the little republic of Montenegro). His predecessor as Yugoslav leader, Zoran Lilić, looks set to take over from his political master as Serbian president. He will face Mr Seselj, of the Serbian Radical Party, in a run-off on 5 October. For supporters of the moderate opposition, the choice is depressing – between Mr Lilić, widely regarded as a Milošević puppet, on the one hand, and the aggressive Mr Seselj, on the other. Mr Lilić is likely to be regarded by many as the lesser evil; but the chances of an in-

creased boycott seem high. If less than 50 per cent of eligible voters cast their vote in the second round, then the presidential election will have to be held a second time.

In December and January, huge street demonstrations forced government retreats. Since then, however, the opposition has fallen into disarray. Zoran Đinđić, mayor of Belgrade and leader of the opposition Democratic Party, led calls for an electoral boycott. But the contradictory signals ("vote!", "don't vote!") from the opposition disoriented many voters. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which sent election observers, blamed the government for the "climate of mistrust" which surrounded the election process, including doubts over the printing of ballot sheets. The OSCE talked of "serious concerns" about the electoral process – but also insisted publicly that the boycott had been misguided.

In the parliamentary elections, it seems that the existing government coalition will need new allies in order to form a government. Mr Seselj's Radical Party came second. But there has been widespread speculation in recent weeks that Mr Milošević has struck a secret deal with Mr Drasković. According to one popular theory, the breakaway member of the opposition troika could receive a position in the new government, in return for a promise of partial loyalty to Mr Milošević.

Western observers agreed that an important flaw in the electoral process included highly distorted television coverage. The OSCE referred to a report produced by the European Institute for the Media, whose monitoring mission analysed Serbian media coverage in quantified detail. In particular, the institute argued that election coverage on state television – the only television which people in many parts of Serbia can see, because of government restrictions on independent broadcasting – was "fundamentally flawed".

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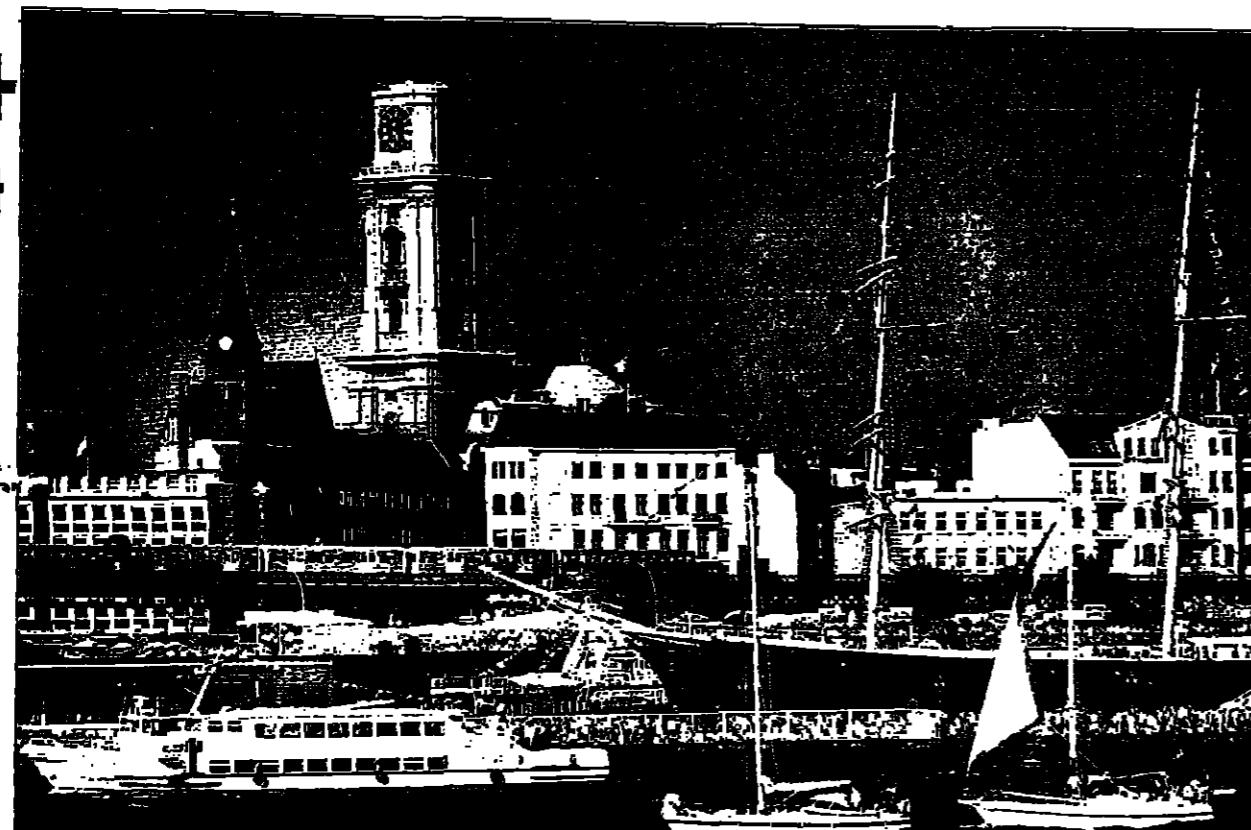
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Making waves: Hamburg, Germany's gateway to the world, where the mayor played the racist card. Photograph: Rex

France's favourite game show host not amused by allegations of funny business

Is the country's most popular television game show a fix? At least three fingers of suspicion point at the presenter of *Intervilles*, the prototype for *Jeux sans Frontières*. A French institution lies in ruins. John Lichfield plays the joker ...

the satirical newspaper, *Le Canard Enchaîné*, which first made the allegations. So has Jean-Marie Delahaye, mayor of one of the Puy-du-Fou villages and leader of the team on the fateful night.

In the meantime, everyone has started throwing mud at everyone else – rather like a sequence from *Intervilles* itself.

The mayor of a village beaten by Puy-du-Fou last year announced he had seen Mr Chabodo making similar signs at a similarly tense point in the 1996 final. Gilbert Baumet, mayor of Pont-Saint-Esprit, said he believed the gestures were made to the saucy Mr de Villiers himself, sitting in the audience, who relayed them to his team.

After a crisis meeting at TF1, senior executives were shown every edition of *Intervilles* for the last two years (itself an exquisite form of punishment). They also came to the conclusion that there was funny business in last year's final.

Mr Chabodo tersely denies all charges. "I was scratching myself," he is reported to have told his bosses. "You'd have to be an idiot," he told *Canard*.

It is now alleged that on at least two occasions, this year's semi-final and last year's final,



Olivier Chabodo: Allegedly shown on French television signalling the answers

the outcome was fixed by the referee, Mr Chabodo. On both occasions the beneficiary was Puy-du-Fou, a collection of villages in western France, whose chief local big-wig is Philippe de Villiers, an aristocratic, ultra-conservative, anti-European politician.

The videotape of the semi-final in July shows Mr Chabodo giving a surreptitious, three-fingered gesture on three occasions, as the Puy-du-Fou villagers were struggling to answer a multiple-choice question. "We are agreed that the answer is number three," announced the team leader.

A few minutes later, with the referee out of camera shot, the Puy-du-Fou team again gave the right answer, but, once again, seemed to know the number of the answer, rather than the answer itself.

The main French private television channel, TF1, and the production company of *Intervilles*, have said they will start legal action against Mr Chabodo. He has said he will sue

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Red Hamburg snubs racists

Chancellor Helmut Kohl's beleaguered government has been thrown a life-line by even more shambolic opponents. As the Social Democrats self-destruct in Red Hamburg, Imre Karac examines the prospects of the German opposition.

For the first time since the beginning of the election campaign, Henning Voscherau did the decent thing yesterday. "Hamburg, my hometown, I wish you luck," he said. With those words he bade farewell not only to Germany's gateway to the world, but to national politics.

"Good riddance," some people in his party muttered. For Mr Voscherau, outgoing mayor of Hamburg and would-be Social Democrat finance minister, is guilty of an unforgivable sin. To descend into the gutter in search of the racist vote might be excusable. But to end up losing votes despite a blatantly populist campaign is very

careless indeed. The tragedy for the SPD is that Mr Voscherau's way represented the future. He and his friends had seen Tony Blair shift the Labour Party to the right and ride the populist wave to power. If it worked in Britain, it should work in Hamburg, he reasoned.

The winning theme was to be "law and order", the words in their original English ennobled across the posters of Hamburg. But given that the Social Democrats have run the city for 40 years, and Mr Voscherau had been mayor for the last 10, he could not exactly blame the local government.

So Mr Voscherau pointed the finger at the enemy in the midst: foreigners. He was to combat crime by sending "home" the immigrants who were largely responsible for soaring crime statistics. The gambit worked, to some extent. On Mr Voscherau's coat-tails, the loathsome German People's Union nearly sneaked into the regional assembly, falling less than 300 votes short of the entry ticket. The Christian Democrats, the mainstream law-and-order party, increased their vote by 5 per cent. But the Social Democrats lost 5 per cent, plunging to their lowest share of the vote in Hamburg since the war. The party still came in first, and should be able to form the city's government in tandem with the Greens. But the experience has left a bitter taste which is bound to linger until next September's national elections.

For the linkage between law and order and immigration was not a fringe issue floated by a marginal politician. Mr Voscherau had been marked out for greater things, and his campaign theme was the trial balloon of the Social Democrats' best-placed champion against Mr Kohl next year.

"Internal security" and the danger posed to German society by foreigners is the hobby horse of Mr Voscherau's closest political ally, Gerhard Schroeder, Prime Minister of neighbouring Lower Saxony. Mr Schroeder fancies himself as the German Tony Blair. He has his own regional elections next April, and if he wins those handsomely, he will make a bid for the national nomination. Mr Schroeder was adamant yesterday he will not alter his strategy.

Commuters suffer heavy delays after Southall rail crash

Last week's train crash at Southall paralysed a key stretch of the rail network, severely disrupting commuter traffic. Randeep Ramesh, Transport Correspondent, predicts that today's journey will be easier.

Train operators promised a "near normal" service today after commuters suffered 24 hours of travel chaos.

Friday's west London train crash disaster at Southall, which killed six people, saw rail services on the busy section of track between Reading and Paddington suspended - forcing other train companies to put on extra carriages.

Extra carriages were added to existing services between Reading and Waterloo, although the number of services was not being increased. Train companies said the only problem for travellers today was that "a few peak-hour trains may terminate earlier than expected but passengers could use connecting services".

Yesterday, South West Trains added up to four extra carriages on services to Bristol and Reading. Some Great Western high-speed trains, which would normally terminate at Paddington, were redirected to Waterloo.

Motoring organisations reported heavier traffic than usual on the local roads surrounding train stations and on the M4 heading into London. This is not expected to continue today. A spokesman for Great Western Trains, said that there was extra journey time of up to an hour for



Passengers at Reading station queuing for trains to London which were disrupted while the track was repaired at Southall

Photograph: Tom Pilston

customers from the south west and Wales. In London, travellers were told to avoid Paddington station. Six people died and more than 160 other passengers were injured in Friday's crash when a high

speed train from Swansea to Paddington smashed into an empty freight train crossing in front of it at near Southall station. While most of the wreckage was cleared from the line yesterday, workers

still have to replace 500 yards of damaged track and signalling. Investigations are continuing into the cause of the crash, with key questions about in-train protection systems still unanswered. Rail bosses

have refused to comment on whether the Advanced Warning System was working in the driver's car, or whether the more sophisticated Automatic Train Protection (ATP) device was switched on.

TV producer hits out at BBC 'quota' on swearing

Television executives at the BBC have told one of Britain's top television producers to remove four swear words from a new BBC1 drama.

Keneth Trodd, who made *Karaoke* and *Cold Lazarus*, has been allowed to keep three swear words in his new football film *The Fix* to be shown next week.

But he hit out at the corporation's "unofficial quota" keeping and is furious at what he calls the BBC's nonsensical attitude to swearing.

Mr Trodd says BBC1 executives are too quick to censor dramas they believe could offend the public.

His latest work, to be screened on 4 October, centres on the 1963 football betting scandal. The comedian Steve Coogan stars as a tabloid journalist.

Mr Trodd's first version used strong dressing room language and featured seven expletives.

"They [the executives] never know their own minds from month to month. When we made the film it was cleared all the way up the ladder," he said.

"Now long after the film is finished they announce we want all of the f-words out.

"It's not overdone and all of them occur in natural places within context. Time moves on and people's attitudes change. I remember when the word we couldn't use was 'bloody'.

"It is a very BBC1 problem because *Our Friends In The North* and *Hold On BBC2* have swearing in some profusion. It is a silly preoccupation and a neurosis on the part of senior executives.

"We have to go back to the cutting rooms and do it which will cost several thousand pounds to re-voice and re-cut," Mr Trodd added.

A spokesman for BBC drama said: "A number of expletives have been removed from *The Fix*, this is part of the normal editorial process which takes account of the wider audience on BBC1."



Brothers in arms: Liam (left) and Noel Gallagher

Photograph: Russell Boyce/Reuters

Police zero in on Oasis touts

A "zero tolerance zone" will be set up to trap ticket touts who try to target fans at three Oasis concerts, police warned yesterday. Sergeant Dick Sutton, who is leading policing of the concerts on Thursday, Friday and Saturday at Earls Court in London, said he wanted to deter fans from turning up in the hope of buying black market tickets.

He said the tout "exclusion zone" will be enforced in and around Earls Court Underground station. "We are expecting 20,000 fans at each concert."

"Crowd control is a concern and we want to send the message to people who haven't got a ticket that there is no point turning up. We will be arresting ticket touts before each concert under a British Rail by-law."

They would be held until after the concert and released after a caution. "They face losing money by not being able to sell the tickets," Sgt Sutton said.

Mother smothered girl, 3, after father's threats

A mother "gently" smothered her three-year-old daughter to death after the child's violent and abusive father threatened to take her away, an Old Bailey judge was told yesterday. Rose Auma, 20, ran away from her alcoholic mother at the age of 14 and was repeatedly raped by the father of her child. The court heard she found shelter with a family but was used and abused by them.

"She was treated as a servant and a source of sexual gratification," said Helena Kennedy QC, for the defence. At 16 she gave birth to Harriette having suffered constant sexual abuse by a friend of the family, who was described as a "violent and aggressive man".

On 6 June, the day before she took her daughter's life, the father came to her new address in Canning Town, east London, stole all her money, many of her treasured belongings and warned her he intended to come back and take the child. "She lived in fear of his visits," said Miss Kennedy.

The 20-year-old mother was already suffering from a severe depressive illness and the thought of losing her daughter pushed her over the edge. She decided to kill herself, but was worried that her child would be left alone so she decided to kill Harriette as well. Auma said afterwards: "I did it gently. I put a pillow over her face. I wanted us both to go on the same day."

After killing Harriette while she slept, Auma took an overdose but woke up and was sick. Two days later she was found sitting on a park bench in the pouring rain stuffing pills into her mouth. She then blurted out what she had done and was taken to hospital. Miss Kennedy said: "She has led a terrible life. She lived in terror of the father. She killed the one true person she loved because she felt the father would come back and take her child away."

Judge Graham Boal QC ordered that she be detained in a secure hospital for treatment under Section 37 of the Mental Health Act. Auma pleaded guilty to manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility. Her plea of not guilty to murder was accepted by the judge, who described the case as "a very sad story" and "a tragedy".

Judge Graham Boal QC ordered that she be detained in a secure hospital for treatment under Section 37 of the Mental Health Act. Auma pleaded guilty to manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility. Her plea of not guilty to murder was accepted by the judge, who described the case as "a very sad story" and "a tragedy".

The trial continues today.

— Kathy Marks

Former boxing champion's quest for greater knowledge lands him in court over false information on grant application

It was while detained at Her Majesty's Pleasure, awaiting trial for attempted murder, that Terry Marsh, the former champion boxer and one-time Liberal Democrat candidate, acquired his taste for learning.

So keenly was his appetite whetted that after graduating in politics and government, he applied for a second grant to enable him to study for another degree, Southwark

Crown Court in south London, was told yesterday. The problem was that Mr Marsh allegedly failed to tell the London Borough of Tower Hamlets that he had already received one grant. "He deliberately censored certain information about himself and left it off the application form," said Michael Speak, for the prosecution.

Mr Marsh, 39, of Basildon, the Essex

town where he stood down as the Liberal Democrat election candidate this year after being charged in connection with the student grant application, was arrested after Tower Hamlets authorities called in the police. The former IBF world light-welterweight title holder, denies a charge of furnishing false information to the education authority between May and June of

1995. Mr Speak told the jury that, having received a grant from Essex County Council for his first BA honours degree at London Guildhall University, Mr Marsh knew he was not entitled to any further financial assistance. The court heard that he began studying for the initial course in 1991, after being acquitted at the Old Bailey of the attempted murder of Frank Warren,

the boxing promoter, following 10 months spent in prison on remand.

Mr Speak alleged that Mr Marsh, a former fireman and Royal Marine commando, lied when answering a question on the application form about whether he had applied for a grant before.

The trial continues today.

— Kathy Marks

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Food p
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Food police swamp the flavours of the future

Restaurateurs are going on the offensive against what they see as excessive regulation. They fear that if the food police have their way, the restaurant of the future will be a dull and sterile place. Louise Jury gets a taste.

An overweight man orders a steak sandwich and the waiter orders him to step on to scales. A woman asks for soft cheese and the waiter produces a portion from a freezer box. "It's inedible," she says. "But it's safe," he explains.

Posters warn of the hazards of drinking when pregnant. Other signs show how to help someone who is choking. The staff are in sterile uniforms more akin to a hospital.

The scene being painted by restaurateurs, caterers and brewers is unappetising. They have devised a script of what such an evening out might be like and it will be presented in a mock restaurant set - Café La Futura - to MPs at the Labour party conference next week.

The sketch plays for laughs, but the industry is very serious. Its leaders say warning signs to pregnant women, for instance, are obligatory in some parts of the United States. The no-smoking laws introduced in

New York restaurants saw a slump in attendance. And over-regulation is already a problem in Britain, they claim.

Michael Gottlieb, who runs Smollensky's restaurant in London and chairs the Restaurateurs Association of Great Britain, said: "It's already very hard to get a good piece of ripe cheese, for example, because they're supposed to chill them at a certain temperature that takes the enjoyment away.

"And restaurants have to use pasteurised eggs and if you want to make mayonnaise they're not as good. It's taking a lot of the pleasure out of going out to eat."

In a pre-emptive strike, the association has formed the Fo-

run for Reasonable Regulation with other groups in the catering and brewing industries. It will be taking the Café La Futura around Britain to highlight the tightening of the law.

Roger Davis, chairman of the European Catering Association, said the hygiene regulations concerning food had become "extremely onerous".

"The amount of regulation re-

quires full-time senior managers who are just making sure everybody keeps the right records," he said. Most felt safe where they are, otherwise they voted with their feet. "Yet very few people feel safe with the actual growers of the food - with poultry or what pesticides are sprayed on our fruit and veg."

Taste of things to come: Meal time in the film *The cook, the thief, his wife and her lover*

Photograph: Kobal Collection

Britain's cooks turn to convenient option



Despite the popularity of television chefs, Britain has become a nation of convenience eaters. A recent survey showed that 95 per cent of the country uses ready-made meals.

Kate Watson-Smyth reports on the rise of pre-prepared food.

Some months ago, there was a joke doing the rounds among society hostesses who, on being complimented on the excellence of their cuisine, would airily mention that Mrs Steff was in the kitchen.

Those in on the joke would smile quietly to themselves while the others would request the lady's phone number and resolve to book her themselves.

But the venerable Mrs Steff turned out to be a euphemism for a ready-made meal bought in from Marks & Spencer - artfully arranged on the best china, the damning evidence of the cartons hastily concealed in the bin.

It is a far cry from dinner parties of 20 years ago, when no self-respecting hostess would spend less than three days in the kitchen with several pots of double cream before even the most informal of get-togethers.

Nowadays, convenience foods are an accepted part of life and an NOP survey has re-

vealed that 95 per cent of Britain's cooks now admit to using ready-made meals.

More than two thirds use supermarket meals from the chill cabinet such as pizzas, pasta and pasta sauces at least once a week and 11 per cent claim to use them at least once a day.

Consumption of ready-made meals in the UK has doubled in five years to 99,000 tonnes last year, making a shopping bill of £505m. The most popular dish is lasagne, followed by curry. Britons also ate their way through 47,000 tonnes of fresh pasta.

This is despite the fact that national terrestrial television is at present showing 15 hours of food and cookery programmes in a week and one cable channel is entirely devoted to the subject.

Tim Sutton, of Geest Prepared Foods which commissioned the Taste 2000 research report, said: "People love to titillate their taste buds by watching sumptuous cookery programmes on TV, but it's often more for entertainment value. For everyday cooking, we don't have the time and are relying more and more on the quality and convenience of fresh prepared food."

But some things never change. Although most people now cheerfully own up to cheating, in the North-east, for example, 16 per cent still pretend they have been slaving over a hot stove in order to satisfy their guests.

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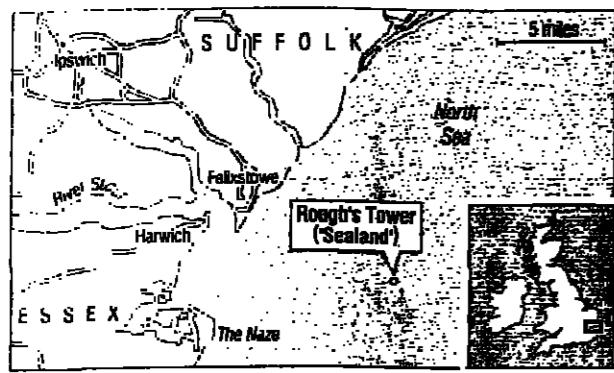


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10/MONEY LAUNDERING

Global fraudsters use sea fortress as passport to riches

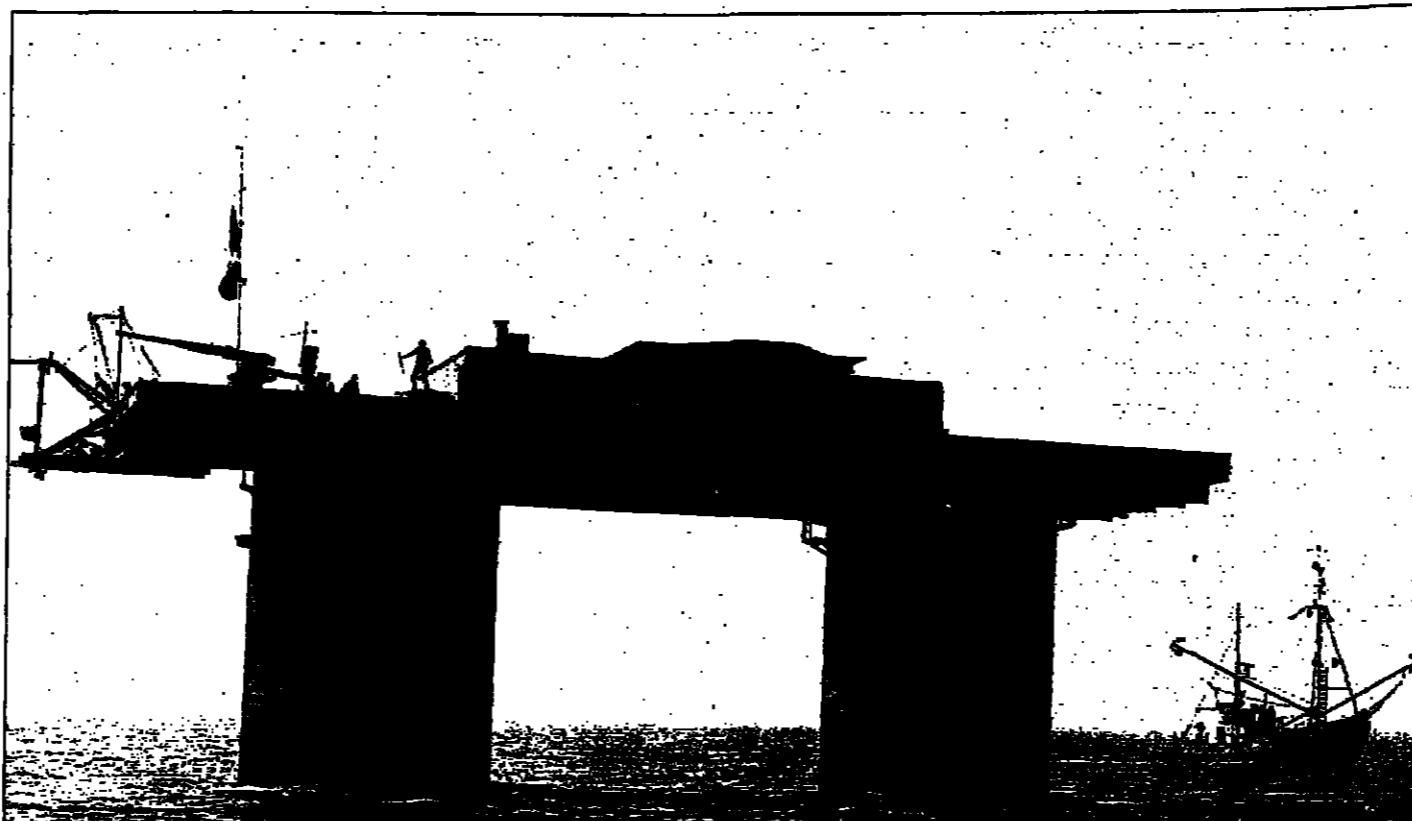


Money-launderers and drug-dealers have discovered a new way to fool banks and fraud investigators; they use false identities and pretend to be from a fictitious country. Steve Boggan discovered how they are using their new scam all over the world – and how effective it can be.

law officers in Slovenia found that forged diplomatic papers from the Principality of Sealand were used to open bank accounts through which the proceeds of illegal pyramid investment schemes in eastern Europe were channelled.

Bank and customs officials around the world have been fooled into accepting Sealand passports as valid – even though the principality is nothing more than a Second World War naval fortress, seven miles off the coast of Felixstowe.

The principality was founded 30 years ago by Roy Bates, 75, a wealthy businessman who lives on the concrete platform with his wife Joan. He declared independence in 1966 and produces his own passports, stamps and coins but he has no dealings with the criminals and is



Prince of all he surveys: Roy Bates (right) declared independence for Sealand, a concrete fortress in the North Sea (above), in 1966



Photographs: East Anglian Daily Times

Fake passports from a self-proclaimed "principality" off the English coast are being used by criminals in multi-million pound money-laundering and drug-smuggling operations.

In the latest case to surface,

furious they are forging his papers.

During the past year, evidence has emerged that fake Sealand passports have been

used by crooks all over the world. Passports seized in the Slovenian caper had entry and exit stamps from at least 10 countries, including Bulgaria,

Romania, Iraq, Iran and Libya. Police are examining evidence that 4,000 forged Sealand passports were sold at around £1,000 a time to Hong Kong citizens

before the handover to China in July. *The Independent* has been told that drug smugglers have also been apprehended carrying the fake papers.

Mr Bates was enraged to learn that Torsten Reineck, the German on whose houseboat

Andrew Cunanan committed suicide after the murder of Gianni Versace, carries a Principality of Sealand passport. It is understood he drives around Los Angeles in a car with Sealand "diplomatic plates".

Mr Bates, who uses the title of Prince, says international lawyers believe his declaration of independence is valid because, when he made it, the fort stood outside British territorial waters. Britain later extended its waters to include Sealand and does not recognise it as a principality.

Whether or not his passports are valid, the Prince of Sealand said yesterday that those being used by criminals were not issued by him. "Every country in the world has problems like this," he told *The Independent*. "The world is awash with fake passports. I'm just angry they're faking mine and using them for illegal purposes."

Interpol was alerted to the latest scam by the Slovenian authorities last year, after two Austrians opened a bank account in false names using a Principality of Sealand diplomatic pass-

port. At first, the bank suspected nothing, but its manager called in the Slovenian Office for Money Laundering Prevention (OMLP) once 12 million deutschmarks (£4.36m) arrived in a one-month period from Germany, Luxembourg and the UK.

The couple posed as husband and wife, and the man described himself as minister of economic affairs for the Principality of Sealand," said Klaudio Stroligo, director of the OMLP. "There are so many new states and young countries now that the bank official accepted the passport as identification to open the account."

Mr Stroligo and Barbara Brezigar, the state prosecutor, were alerted by the bank after the couple withdrew 200,000 marks and later made arrangements to draw out a further 4 million marks. The bank allowed them to draw out a smaller amount and the couple were followed to the border with Italy, where they failed to declare the cash and were arrested.

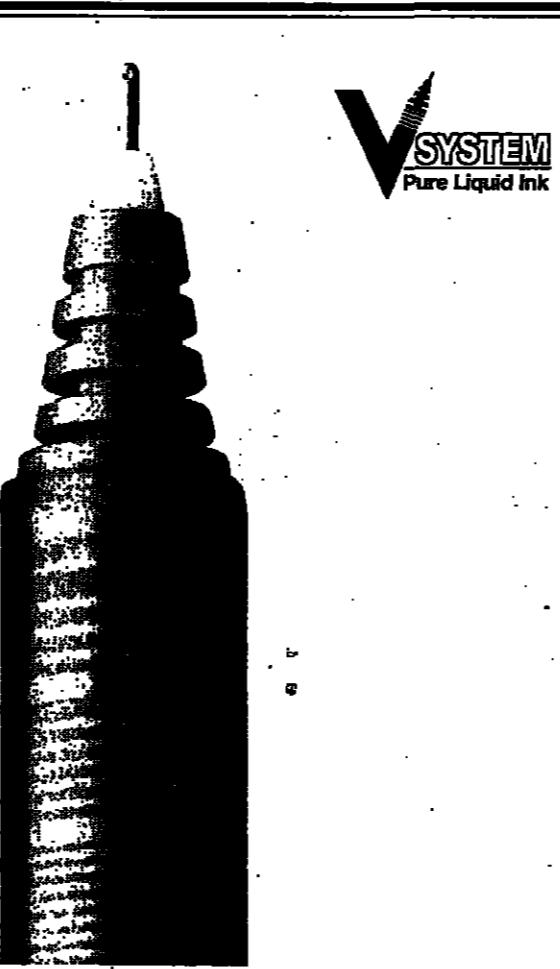
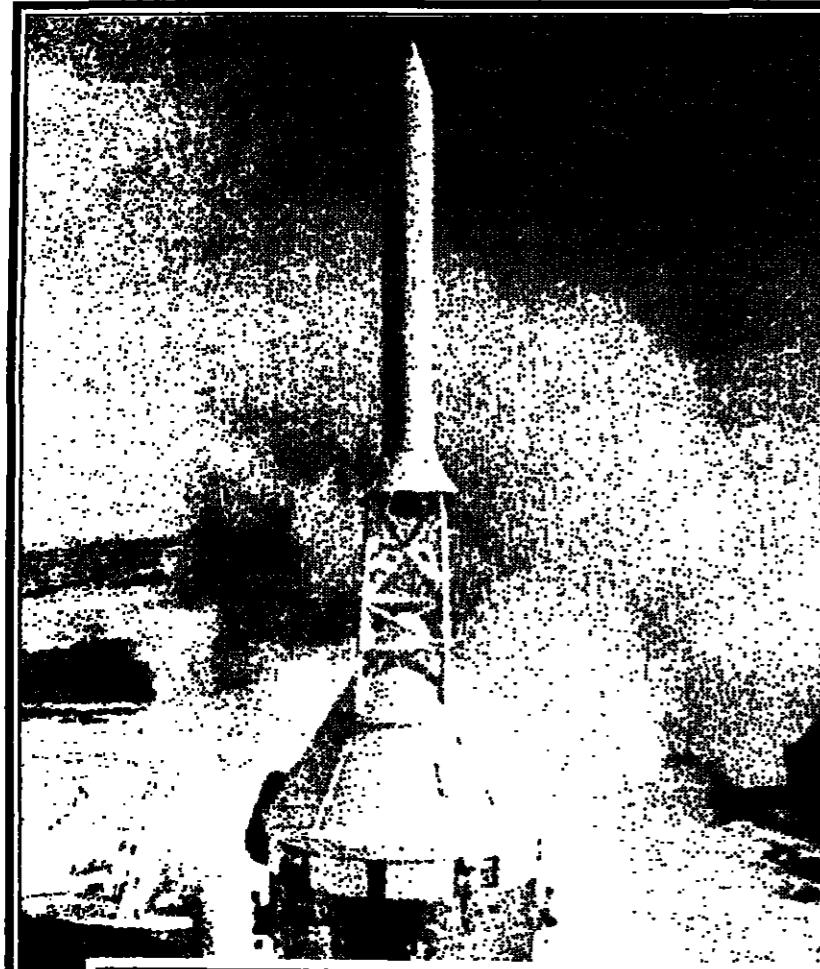
However, they could be charged only with forgery and were granted bail by a judge. Ms Brezigar said the case was still live, but the couple are now in Austria and she does not expect to see them again. During her investigations, papers were seized, bearing the Principality of Sealand letterhead, ad-

dressed to a number of countries and asking for aid. Mr Stroligo refused to say which countries responded but he said several had replied, promising money.

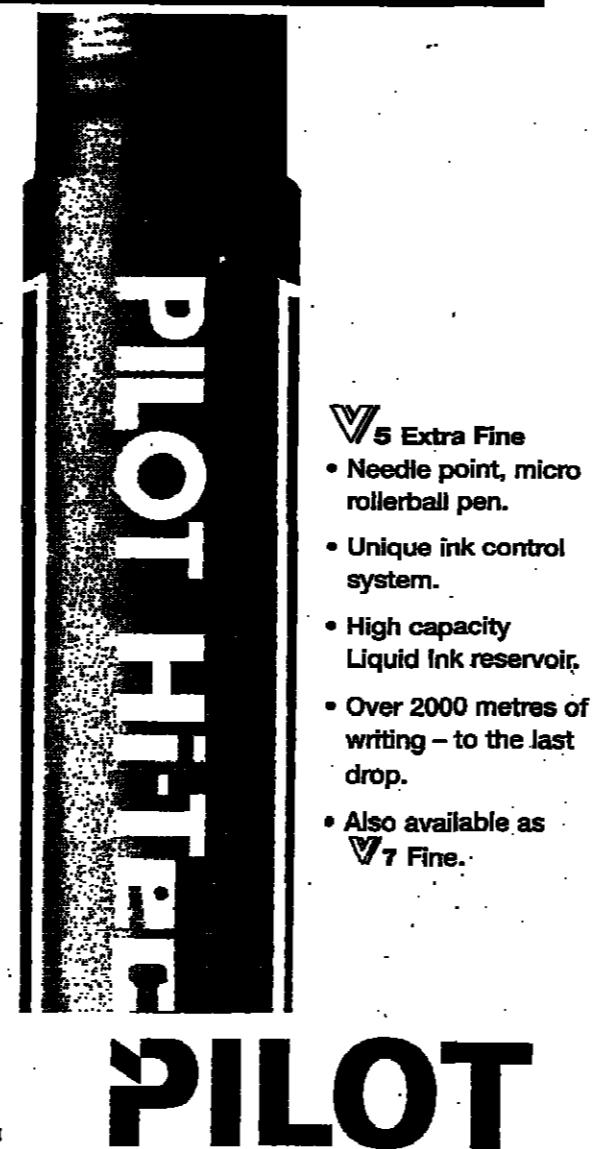
"It presented us with a strange philosophical question," he added. "It was about territoriality and recognition. Did we recognise these passports or not? Who is to say what is or isn't a country? For a time in 1991, after Slovenia was briefly caught up in the Bosnian war, many countries refused to recognise our nation."

News of the underworld's fascination with Sealand came as no surprise to Mr Bates. Over the past three decades, his domain has been targeted several times by gangsters who want to use it as a tax dodge or a haven for illicit activities. In the 1970s, the fortress was invaded by Dutch gangsters who took his son, Michael, hostage. Mr Bates and a number of supporters took it after landing by helicopter and surprising the invaders.

A spokeswoman for the Home Office said Sealand, which is officially known as "Rough's Tower Gun Platform", was part of the UK and described its passports as "fictitious". It is understood that Interpol has put out an alert for immigration authorities to watch out for Sealand passports.



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Jordanian militants open fire on Israeli guards

Gummen shot and wounded two Israeli security guards working at the Israeli embassy in Amman, the Jordanian capital, yesterday. "The vehicle stopped and a man took his gun out and shot at the two Israelis, wounding both of them," said a Jordanian official. Israel later said there were three attackers.

The attack was claimed by a hitherto unknown group called the Jordanian Islamic Resistance in a fax to news agencies in Beirut. It said the shooting was in response to "the Zionist enemy's practices against our people in Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon" and called for the release of Ahmed Daqamseh, the Jordanian soldier who killed seven Israeli girls on a school outing to the Jordan river in March.

Police blocked off the street in Amman while detectives began collecting evidence. In Israel, the two guards were identified as Yaakov Levine and Amikam Hadar. They were reported to have suffered only slight injuries.

The Jordanian police officer leading investigations into the attack said the gunmen appeared to have waited for their target at a street corner and opened fire at the two men, in an unmarked hire car with Jordanian licence plates, slowed down. The peace treaty between Israel and Jordan signed in 1994 has never been popular with Jordanians, who feel it has brought them no gains. Nevertheless, King Hussein has stuck firmly to his alliance with the United States and Israel, despite his repeated criticism of the policies of the Israeli government.

—Patrick Cockburn, Jerusalem



Kofi Annan: 'Quiet revolution' to streamline the UN

Cook sees case for change at the UN

Britain may be a diminished power in the world but it has held on to one of only five permanent seats in the UN Security Council. Today, it will embrace plans for an expansion of that membership. At the United Nations, David Usborne reports on a change of heart.

In the jargon, they are the P-5. For more than 50 years, the United States, Russia, China, France and Britain have reigned supreme at the heart of the most powerful of all the UN's multiple institutions, the Security Council.

But patience with this ex-

clusive club has been eroding. The complaint is that the present structure, with the P-5 and a rotating membership of 10 other countries, reflects a world view based more on who won the Second World War than on present-day realities.

Debate on overhauling the Council has been gathering momentum for years. While the United States earlier this year backed broadening the line-up, Britain remained defensive. Its spot on the P-5 was arguably one of the last legacies of empire.

This morning, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, will signal a change. In his debut address to the annual meeting of the UN General Assembly, he is set not only to voice support for reform of the Council but to ask that it be agreed quickly.

if possibly by the end of the year.

His appeal will form part of a wider pitch for progress on all fronts of UN reform. He is expected strongly to back the package for change unveiled by the Secretary General of the UN, Kofi Annan.

Mr Annan broke with tradition yesterday by delivering a speech before the start of the general debate in the Assembly, which is led by foreign ministers from all 185 member countries and, in the case of the US, by President Bill Clinton. In it Mr Annan pleaded for backing for his reform drive.

"Let this be the Reform Assembly," he declared.

Mr Annan's proposals – his "quiet revolution" – aim to streamline the UN bureaucracy and direct money saved

from administrative costs to development projects. The other main planks of the reform agenda are restoring the UN's financial health and revamping the Security Council.

Following America's lead, Mr Cook will nominate Germany and Japan as two clear candidates for permanent spots in the Council. Officials indicated, however, that he will steer clear of the potentially intractable issue of which Third World countries may be offered three more permanent seats.

Yesterday, President Clinton told the Assembly progress was being made towards persuading the US Congress to release at least a portion of the roughly \$1.5bn Washington still owes the UN. As much as \$900m could be paid if a recalcitrant Congress acquiesces.

Doctors in Aids vaccine trial

A group of doctors said yesterday that they would submit themselves as the ultimate guinea-pigs in the search for a vaccine against Aids. About 50 members of the International Association of Physicians in Aids Care are ready to be injected with a trial vaccine containing a small amount of a live, though genetically weakened, strain of the HIV virus that causes Aids. Discussion on launching the trials will be opened with US government officials in Washington later this week.

—David Usborne

Japan's Cabinet Convict quits

A minister who had become known as the "Cabinet Convict" was forced to resign yesterday in a political fiasco which has undermined confidence in the Japanese government.

Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister, made a public apology following the departure of Koko Sato, whom he appointed as head of the Management and Co-ordination Agency in a cabinet reshuffle 12 days ago. The appointment provoked nationwide disgust because in 1986 Mr Sato, whose new brief included cleaning up Japan's bureaucracy, received a three-year suspended sentence for taking an \$8,000 bribe.

—Richard Lloyd Parry

Banana lawyers attack press

The trial of former Zimbabwean president Canaan Banana on 11 charges of sodomy and indecent assault began yesterday in Harare with a plea from his lawyers for dismissal because sensational press coverage had prejudiced the case. Mr Banana, who attended court with his wife Janet, was charged after Jeftha Dube, a former police inspector, claimed during a murder trial that he killed a man who called him Mr Banana's "wife". Mr Dube said Mr Banana had forced him into a homosexual relationship when he worked as an aide. Homosexual acts are illegal in Zimbabwe and carry a jail sentence of up to 10 years.

—Mary Braid

Men's beards too short

Afghanistan's fundamentalist Islamic Taliban, which rules much of the country, has punished 16 men for trimming their beards, as required by Islamic law. Radio Sharq said the men had been caught by the Department for Promoting Virtue and Preventing Vice while on operations in Kabul. The Taliban has ordered all men to grow their beards long enough to protrude out of a fist clasped at the base of the chin.

REUTERS



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JOHN LEWIS

Moscow reopens the door to religious intolerance

Boris Yeltsin is poised to pass a law giving Russia's minority religions fewer rights than they have in any other secular society. Only two months ago, following protests from the Pope, the United States and international civil rights groups, he vetoed similar legislation, casting himself as the defender of the freedom to worship. Phil Reeves in Moscow investigates what went wrong.

The other day Vadim Tounayev had a nasty shock. He and his colleagues had been invited to a jubilee celebration in a small town outside Moscow. They decided to bake a huge cake to give to local officials. Their offering, all 850kg of it, was accepted happily enough by the community elders when they arrived at Orikhevo-Zuyevo. Yet they were not. Organisers told them that they could attend the festivities, but – as members of a Hare Krishna society – they would not be allowed to speak publicly. Any attempt to preach or proselytise would be against the law, the officials declared.

Legally, the officials were wrong. But for Mr Tounayev, the incident was ominous. "This is what will happen in the future. This is the kind of discrimination we can expect from local authorities when the law goes through," he said.

The law in question is a bill sharply curtailing freedom of worship in Russia. It was overwhelmingly passed by the lower house of parliament in Moscow last week. Every sign suggests that in the next few weeks it will breeze through the upper house and on to the desk of the President, who will sign it. Thus will religious intolerance, one of the deepest evils of the Soviet state, be restored to Russia, reversing one of the triumphs of glasnost.

"He has got himself in a very difficult situation," said Diederik Lohman of Helsinki/Human Rights, which has vowed to take the issue to Russia's Constitutional Court if he signs. "If he vetoes it, he will be accused of not being in control of his own administration. If he signs, there will be another big outcry."

The offending law divides religious bodies into categories, which clearly favour Russia's dominant religions, Orthodoxy, Islam, Buddhism and Judaism.

Those churches that can provide documentary evidence that it

had a legal status in Brezhnev's Soviet Union 15 years ago will be recognised legally, and allowed to function normally.

Those that cannot will must wait until 15 years have elapsed since they were registered.

During that time, they will not be able to publish religious literature, run schools, hold services in public places such as hospitals or crematoria, invite foreign preachers, or receive charitable status. The list of those which may face restric-

tions is long – from Baptists and Seventh Day Adventists to Jehovah's Witnesses.

The losers "would have fewer rights than minority believers anywhere outside openly theocratic states such as Saudi Arabia", said Lawrence Uzzell of the Oxford-based Keston Institute, which monitors religious freedom in the former Soviet Union.

The law blatantly violates Russia's 1993 constitution, under which all faiths are equal be-

fore the law. At risk are a large number of congregations which did not register 15 years ago because of Soviet religious repression. "Even congregations that have existed continuously for decades ... often lacked legal registration until recently because they refused to compromise with a totalitarian atheist state," Mr Uzzell said.

Underlying this there is a deeper worry. Laws in Russia are rarely observed by the letter. The fear is that Mr Yeltsin's

compromise will deepen prejudice in a culture which already treats outsiders with suspicion. In Belgorod, 400 miles south of Moscow, officials recently told a Catholic parish that it could not register because it was a foreign religious organisation. The priest was reportedly blocked by police from entering the city. Yet his parishioners were all Russians, seeking to reclaim a Catholic Church that was built under the tsars. More such outrages loom on the horizon.

TODAY'S BELIEVERS

In a land where a Communist dictatorship long cracked down on the practice of religion, precise figures for membership of the various religions are difficult to obtain.

However, experts at the Moscow-based Institute of Religion and Law offer this rough statistical breakdown on Russian religion:

Russian Orthodox: 20 million; Muslim: 2 million; Protestant: 1.5 million; Buddhist: 500,000; Jewish: 150,000; Catholic: 50,000; Hare Krishna: 10,000; Others: 100,000

Sources: Columbia and Random House encyclopedias



Boris Yeltsin in the Kremlin with Alexei II (third from right) in June for the latter's fifth anniversary as head of the Russian Orthodox Church

Photograph: Grigory Dukor

New cloud hangs over Mir as Gore admits to doubts about space station's safety

As a mysterious brown cloud floated around Mir, hinting at new problems aboard the ailing Russian space station, Al Gore, the US Vice-President, suggested that America's patience with the project might finally be exhausted. Reuters reports from Moscow

Calling *Mir* "a very old space station", the US Vice-President, Al Gore, yesterday hinted that the United States might not send a relief astronaut to the orbiting station as planned later this week.

Mr Gore, who is holding talks with Russia's Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, outside Moscow, drew a distinction between long-term US-Russian space co-operation and the American commitment to the 11-year-old *Mir*.

"We will make a careful evaluation whether to proceed with the seventh shuttle-*Mir* docking," he said.

Any decision to move forward will be based solely on mission safety. This is a very old space station."

Mr Gore's cautious statement contrasted sharply with remarks by Mr Chernomyrdin, who has regularly met the American Vice-President to discuss bilateral co-operation on space and technology. "There are no problems for the continuation of joint Russian-American experiments on the Russian space station," he said.

Mr Gore has been a leading proponent of US-Russian co-operation in space. But the string of technical failures this

year has inflamed criticism in Washington, which has bankrolled much of *Mir*'s expenses in recent years.

Yesterday the ageing space station suffered from several new problems. The central computer went down again and a mysterious brown cloud appeared outside the craft itself.

Cosmonauts noticed a the brown substance, or drops leaking from the station, which they could not identify. Russian space officials were also unsure

what to make of the reports of the brown substance of unknown origin.

"We have another observation which we do not understand at all. When we were monitoring the turning of the ship we saw some brown drops coming from it," *Mir*'s commander Anatoly Solovyov said in a radio exchange.

The flight engineer Pavel Vinogradov said they noticed the drops when they fired the engines of the *Soyuz* escape capsule to turn the station round, so that its solar panels could absorb more energy.

"The drops were fanning outwards for a long time and then stopped. They were a brown colour," he said.

The computer failure disabled *Mir*'s automatic orientation system, which points the station at the Sun for its solar panels to soak up maximum energy. As a result, the crew spent part of the day in darkness with major systems shut down to save power.

Later yesterday the crew was reported to have repaired the space station's computer. The crew had not, however, restarted the system that removes carbon dioxide from the station. The deputy flight director Viktor Blagov said the problem was relatively easy to rectify and the crew could survive 26 days without the system.

The US space shuttle *Atlantis* is due to blast off on Thursday with a relief cosmonaut, David Wolf, aboard. It is intended to dock with *Mir* three days later.

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14/LIB DEM CONFERENCE

Delegates are divided over 'dining with Beelzebub'

Leading figures in the Liberal Democrats have attacked suggestions that the party should move closer to Labour. But Fran Abrams, Political Correspondent, found at their conference in Eastbourne that other members welcome the opportunities that collaboration could bring.

which brings together Liberal Democrats and ministers met for the first time last week, but some in the party believe it could mean a loss of independence.

The Liberal Democrat leader suggested he was prepared to take risks in order to win greater influence over government policy. However, he would continue to oppose Labour on many other issues.

"Although we work with Labour in areas where it is good for the country to do so and where we agree, we do not have difficulty in being a more effective opposition in issues like under-funding our education and health, where Labour has frankly broken its promises. It is monstrous to have a situation where you agree about something, but still refuse to work together in order to put it into effect."

At a lunchtime fringe meeting, the party's Social Security

spokesman in the House of Lords, Earl Russell, compared working with Labour to dining with Beelzebub.

"I have no objection whatever to issue-based co-operation. I believe it strongly. I have no objection at all to supping with the Devil – that's day-to-day politics. What I object to is having to call him an angel because I want my dinner," he said. "... If we go into coalition on the basis of Labour's present policy, I might find that Ian Foster was right: the tragedy of life is that one gets what one wants."

Liz Lynne, the former Liberal Democrat MP for Rochdale who lost her seat to Labour at the general election, also argued that the party should remain proudly independent: "Working with like-minded people, yes. With people in the Cabinet on constitutional reform, yes. But I am sorry to say we won't find those like-minded people in the Cabinet."

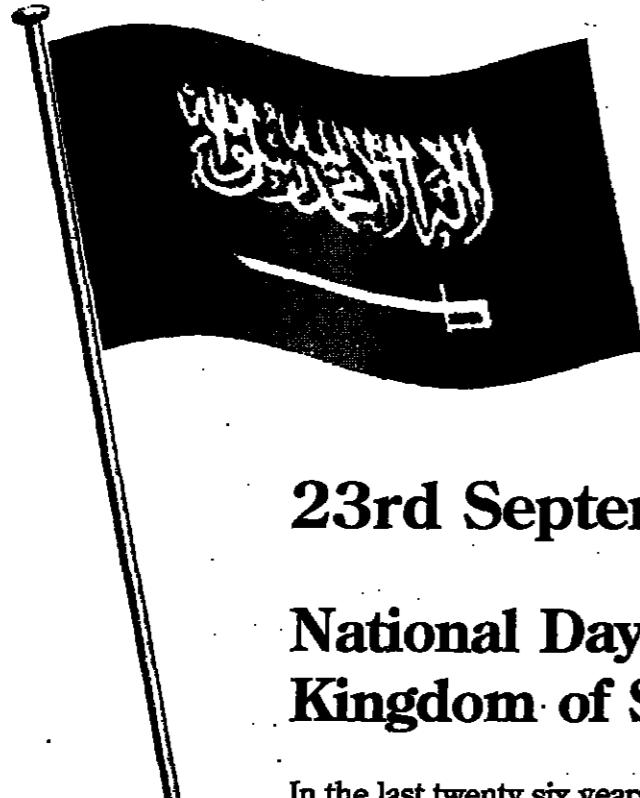
"Like children who have never grown up, they say 'If you speak to him you can't be a friend of mine. You can't talk to my gang and his gang at the same time'."



All together: Paddy Ashdown (centre) and Lib Dem MPs at the party conference yesterday. Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Paddy Ashdown was forced to defend his party's policy of 'constructive opposition' yesterday amid implied criticism from some of his colleagues. At the same time others were urging him to grasp the nettle and to form a new alliance with Labour.

A new joint cabinet committee on constitutional reform



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Treasury spokesman questions need for penny on income tax policy

The Liberal Democrat commitment to a penny-in-the-pound tax increase was the party's most prominent election campaign policy. Anthony Bewis, Political Editor, thinks its future is now in doubt.

Opening the economic debate on the first day of the Liberal Democrats' Eastbourne conference, the party's Treasury spokesman, Malcolm Bruce, told representatives: "After almost a decade dominated by huge public-sector deficits, I believe individual provision in such areas as pensions, along with greater economic stability, could usher in a new era with the resources available to create quite simply the best education and health services in the world here in Britain ..."

"Of course, if public finances do dramatically improve, there is no reason why the tax burden should not in time be lightened. We are not afraid to propose tax rises when they are needed, as they are now, but we are not a



Malcolm Bruce at the conference today: Departments need detailed targets. Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

party that favours higher taxes for the sake of it."

Calculations by the Commons library, based on "reasonable" assumptions, show that the overall surplus available for possible tax cuts or increased spending on health and education – could go from £9bn in 1999/2000 to £34bn in 2003/04. Those figures include an annual 0.75 per cent real-terms increase in spending on health and education.

But Mr Bruce told the Conference: "We must be able to

ensure that extra money yields extra concrete results. Throwing money at problems isn't the answer. When Labour ministers talk today about higher standards, you know it is because they want to delay till tomorrow thinking about increased resources. But I want to see a new settlement for key public services in which higher resources and higher standards go hand in hand."

Mr Bruce proposed a new Public Finances Act, imposing a duty on departments to set out

detailed targets, performance criteria and operating objectives for the public. He said that was the sort of information that people paying for a private service would expect, and such a service delivery agreement could be policed by parliament.

Mr Bruce said that all government employees should be accountable for the delivery of higher standards and pay should be used as a weapon to reward and punish good and bad performance.

"And politicians should be more accountable, too ... If standards and promises aren't delivered, failing ministers should take pay cuts too. That would concentrate minds at the Department of Health."

Earlier, Mr Bruce delivered a strong attack on Labour's initial record. He said: "People know that Gordon Brown's 'something for nothing' economics just doesn't add up. And we are seeing the results already. Hospital waiting lists rising to record levels. Nurses and teachers told to take real pay cuts ..."

"Tony Blair says it's all just the Tory legacy. But now it's Labour's responsibility."

Scots leader calls wants PR for local council elections

One of the first Bills put to the new Scottish Parliament should introduce proportional representation for council elections, Jim Wallace, the Scottish Liberal Democrat leader, declared yesterday. He said there was agreement between the Liberal Democrats and the Scottish National Party to introduce such a Bill and he challenged Labour to give its backing as well.

Addressing the Liberal Democrat conference, he acknowledged that a Scottish Parliament set up under a voting system based on proportional representation might result in coalition government for Scotland. But he stressed: "The task of Scottish Liberal Democrats is to prepare a distinctive Liberal Democrat platform and to campaign for the election of many Scottish Liberal Democrat members as possible."

Mr Wallace said 18 years of Tory government had "emasculated" local government. He added: "PR for council elections will be a powerful antidote to the seediness too often associated with Labour-run councils in west Central Scotland, the arrogant exercise of unchallenged power by those who all too often take the electorate for granted." Referring to the decision by the people of his own constituency of Orkney to oppose tax-varying powers for the Scottish parliament, Mr Wallace said it would serve as a "reminder to Scots parliamentarians that the Parliament must be sensitive to the needs and aspirations of Scotland's so-called peripheral areas."

Steel under fire for taking £94,000 from hunting lobby

David Steel drew criticism from fellow Liberal Democrats yesterday after revelations that he had accepted £94,000 from the hunting lobby. Although all agreed that the former party leader had the right to express his views, several said they were disappointed that he had accepted payment as part-time chairman of the Countryside Movement.

Norman Baker, the Liberal Democrat MP for Lewes, pointed out that Lord Steel, who retired as an MP in May, had registered his financial interest in the group. "It was always known he was heavily involved. Personally I would not want to take money from any external source. I think being an MP is a full time job," he said.

Jackie Ballard, MP for Taunton, is a sponsor of the Private Member's Bill to ban hunting with dogs which is being brought by the Labour MP for Worcester, Michael Foster, this autumn. She said Lord Steel had made his views on hunting – that others should be free to take part in it – well known. But she added: "I actually think they have got bad value for their money because they are going to lose when it goes through parliament. I have no problem with David Steel, but I don't get paid to express my views which are strongly anti-hunting."

Jo Morton, delegate for Hesthwaite and a member of the Green Liberal Democrats, said: "I think there's a clear line between being paid to do a job and simply promoting a good cause."

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Tie-up: William Hague adjusts his attire on a visit to the North-East

Photograph: Raoul Dixon/North News

Major plans an emotional curtain-call

John Major will go to the Totes' Blackpool conference to back the new leader. Will that be useful? Yes, says Colin Brom: Mr Hague needs all the help he can get.

The former prime minister, John Major, will make an emotional return to the platform at the opening of the Conservative Party conference in Blackpool to rally support for William Hague.

The Tory leader's friends say that Mr Major would be appealing for the loyalty of the conference following the party's worst election defeat this century.

He will be backing William Hague, a source. It will be late to influence the result of a ballot on Mr Hague's leadership, but the former prime minister is expected to help him up his embattled success with an appeal for more loyalty than he himself had when in office.

Mr Major, as reported in *The Independent* on Saturday, spent last week on holiday with Chris Patten at the Spanish home of Tritia Garel Jones, who laughed off suggestions that it was a "plotting" meeting.

The former prime minister will give his backing to Mr Hague on the first day of the conference, minutes before the results are announced of the Tory party membership ballot. The ballot is expected to endorse Mr Hague's leadership, in spite of protests by Alan Clark and others that the leadership question is being mixed up with a request for a mandate for reforming the structure of the party. Mr Hague's keynote leadership address will be the finale of the conference on Friday, as usual.

Mr Hague yesterday repeated the "back me or sack me" threat which he has made from the outset of his leadership, in the clear belief that it will be a foregone conclusion. It could backfire if the embattled party organisation produces a low turnout for the ballot. Some ballot forms are being returned marked "deceased".

The Tory leader's ultimatum to the party's grassroots activists provoked a rush of bets that he will be ousted. Bookmakers William Hill yesterday were taking bets on other potential leaders, notably party vice-chairman and rising star Archie Norman, the former Asda boss, who is quoted at 20/1.

Michael Portillo, the former Secretary of State for Defence who lost his seat at the General Election and former party chairman, and Mr Patten, the former Hong Kong governor, are the two other favourites.

"If Mr Hague finds himself under pressure at the party conference we may have to open a full book on Mr Hague's successor," a spokesman for William Hill said.

The odds against Mr Hague remaining as leader were being quoted as he resumed his national "listening" tour with a visit to East Anglia ahead of next month's party conference in Blackpool.

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Hague boasts of pay restraint but earns more than Cabinet

William Hague
yesterday announced he had surrendered £15,000 in severance pay. But as *Colin Brown*, Chief Political Correspondent, points out, the leader of Her Majesty's Opposition still gets more than Cabinet ministers.

William Hague, yesterday sought to embarrass the Cabinet over its efforts to show pay restraint by disclosing that he had returned £15,000 in severance pay.

The Tory leader was entitled to the bonus after losing his post as a Cabinet minister in the Labour landslide on 1 May.

During a visit to a racing cir-

cuit at Snettisham, Norfolk, he told journalists that he had returned the payment.

"I have given £15,000 back to the Government without trumpeting it, without making a special announcement about it, because I thought I was being paid too much," he said.

However, since winning the leadership of the Tory party, Mr Hague has taken his full entitlement as Leader of the Opposition, amounting to a total £298,000. He added: "I have committed myself to inflation-linked increases."

Mr Hague's self-sacrifice failed to impress Downing Street officials, who pointed out that as the Leader of the Opposition, Tony Blair had declined three increases in salary and took a reduced salary.

"William Hague's salary is £12,000 more than Mr Blair as Leader of the Opposition," said a spokesman, who suggested Mr Hague would take a cut if he accepted performance-related pay.

The Conservative leader also took a month to decide to hand back the money to the Treasury. Tory sources said he received the £15,000 in late May or early June, and decided to return it in July, after he had won the leadership.

Mr Blair plunged the Government into a dilemma over pay rises when he announced last week that he would forgo a further rise next April of £40,000 to show a lead to 1.3 million public sector workers, including nurses, doctors and teachers, who were being asked to show pay restraint.

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WE ALL RESPOND TO A LETTER.

I'd love to go to bed with you, but don't expect to sleep

Snoring is one of the most anti-social human habits, and one which embarrassed women sufferers are particularly reluctant to discuss. Monique Roffey describes its effect on her love life – and reveals the desperate lengths that she has resorted to.

I have a female beauty problem which I'm embarrassed about and ashamed of. It's got so bad that it's been (quite literally) keeping me awake at night.

I snore. Don't laugh – it's hell. Ranking up there with facial hair, flatulence and foot fungus, it's one of those tragic afflictions that some women do have – though they're supposed to happen only to men.

And when I say snore, I mean snore. No, not pretty snuffles, or a mere nocturnal wheeze. I snore like a bag of potatoes. Or a train – or a combine harvester. I snore like a horse, or a bear.

"Actually it's more like a pig," said one friend who had the misfortune to share a room with me on holiday. An old boyfriend of mine used to snore like a pig, and I know how that sounds; the bedclothes billowed. Is that really me? Apparently so.

Humiliating incidents are numerous. There's the time I woke up to find the hand of the lovely man I was sleeping with hovering above my nose? (In his much disturbed sleep, he was desperately trying to snuff me out.) Or was it the time I kept eight complete strangers awake, while moored to the banks of the Nile on a felucca? While the others managed to stuff cotton wool in their ears and hunker down to some kind of snatched shut-eye, the man I was sleeping next to (think young Robert de Niro) stayed up all night with his friend, laughing at me.

"Man, it was bad," he said the next morning, letting me in



Not being able to sleep beside the man of her dreams is proving a nightmare for snorer Monique Roffey. Photograph: Kalpesh Lachigra

on the communal joke.

"How bad?" I asked.

"You scared away the fish," he said, smirking. Looking into his handsomely green eyes, I felt every ounce of sexual attractiveness drain from my body.

Now I'm self-conscious about it, and it's started seriously to affect my life. Well, my love life. While I don't have a regular Mr Right, I'm still out there dating the Mr Maybes. And because of my problem, I've begun to get evasive about

sex. I'm too shy and too proud to snore in front of a man. There are some things that men don't want to know women do – such as changing a tampon and shaving legs in the bath. Snoring like a pig is one of them. While Cinderella gets to turn into a pumpkin, there's no fairy tale around in which the pretty young waif (me), in her search for Prince Charming, turns into a hog. I feel like a freak: half woman, half Sasquatch. A man may go to bed with me, someone he

thinks is a perfectly normal-looking woman, then, during the night – shazam! – just as in some biblical movie, she brings the furniture down around the bed. It's awful.

In the past I've used all kinds of tricks to hide my secret: adopting "fake sleep" positions until the other person is asleep (and himself snoring), running away after sex, making the man leave, keeping him up all night, disappearing mysteriously into another room.

But the problem doesn't

just crop up around sex and men. It's something I don't want anyone to witness – at any time. I won't even have an afternoon snooze on the sofa if I think there's anyone else around. So I snore so badly in the first place. Four past operations on my nose have left it in a bad way. And though none of my bed partners has ever complained (because so far they've been fooled), until I meet Mr Right – the man who is going to love me for who I am (Sasquatch Girl). – I'll sleep alone.

standing around laughing at me.

So for now I sleep only at night – and alone. There's no other solution. I could have surgery, but surgery is the reason why I snore so badly in the first place. Four past operations on my nose have left it in a bad way. And though none of my bed partners has ever complained (because so far they've been fooled), until I meet Mr Right – the man who is going to love me for who I am (Sasquatch Girl). – I'll sleep alone.

The latest treatment is a laser operation on the back of the throat which is performed under local anaesthetic and which can, it is claimed, eliminate the problem rapidly, permanently and almost painlessly. The operation, called "revolutionary" in the blurb, is being heavily promoted by the private health sector: both the Harley Medical Group (which has designated this week National No Snoring Week), and Bupa, which runs a snore clinic at its hospital in Manchester, claim it has a cure rate of 80 to 90 per cent, with "almost everyone" reporting some improvement.

In fact, this operation (which costs about £700 done privately) is not that new. Called Laser Assisted Uvula Palatoplasty, or LAUP, it was developed by a French doctor, Yves Kamani, in the 1980s, caught on initially in Europe and the US but has been available in some NHS units for two or three years. The laser is used to shorten an over-

ly long soft palate and trim the uvula, the small fleshy protuberance which hangs down from the soft palate: this is to unblock the airways and cut out the vibrations which cause snoring. No controlled medical trials have been done (whether LAUP, or to back up the success rates quoted. Sometimes it works only temporarily).

Although the only side-effect of LAUP is described as "sore throat" post-operative pain can be considerable. According to one sleep specialist, some patients found swallowing agony for about a week afterwards, even with painkillers.

Laser treatment for snoring can be carried out in patients, taking about 20 minutes.

It does not work for everyone, because not all snoring is caused by vibrations of the soft palate alone. Snoring occurs when the muscles that hold the throat open relax during sleep and disturb the air flow; tongue, tonsils and adenoids may be the cause.

Snoring may also be connected to obstructive sleep apnoea, a potentially serious breathing disorder which results in excessive daytime sleepiness.

Heavy, habitual snoring should be properly investigated as assessed by a sleep specialist.

Losing weight, avoiding alcohol and cigarettes can all help; a dental splint which keeps the throat open at night is a common first line of treatment. In many cases where a couple seek help, the problem is emotional: someone who has tolerated a partner's snoring for years may suddenly find it unbearable if the relationship is in trouble.

Those who do not wish to abandon their mate to the spare room could try a traditional remedy, although it sounds almost as cruel: sew a tennis ball into the back of her (or his) pyjamas (if they are worn). It just might deter her from sleeping on her back, and thus prevent her jaw from dropping open.

Cherrill Hicks



DR PHIL HAMMOND

A few deaths may be the price we'll have to pay for saving resources

"Dear Dr Hammond,
Having skimmed over your column for some months now, I've noticed that you have an alarming tendency towards nihilism.

"In any organisation as large as the health service, you are going to get a few unproven treatments and bad decisions, some poor communication and callous disregard for human existence. There may even be some doctors who coerce their NHS patients into going private. But in 40 years as a GP I can honestly say that the soundbites are very much in the minority.

The vast majority of health care professionals are well-intentioned folk who give their all in very difficult circumstances.

"If you want to carp, have a go at the politicians and lawyers who are destroying the NHS, and not those who have to work in it.

"You may be too young to remember Bing Crosby, but you would do well to heed his lyrics: "You've got to ACCENT-CHU-ATE the POSITIVE. Eliminate the

negative." So why not drop the so-called satire and give it a try? It could well make you a nicer, happier person.

Yours sincerely,

Dr M Dingley

Swainwick

"PS And do try to reflect the public mood. If people really are as disaffected with the NHS as you suggest, why do I have 200 of the buggers coming into my waiting room every day?"

This letter – with its invitation to try the Crosby Method – arrived on the same day as my copy of *Saying Sane*. Dr Raj Persaud's "passionately argued, impeccably researched, change the way you think about your mind" book.

Had it arrived the day before, I might well have saved myself £17.99, because it seems to be saying much the same thing, but without the references. Raj's closest tribute to Crosby is tucked away on page 217.

Found it yet? Join hands with me and repeat "To stop my daily RANTS against myself, I must kill my ANTS." (Automatic Negative Thoughts). On reflection, I think Bing's version just shades it – or rather, the version written for him and the Andrews Sisters by Arlen, Mercer and Morris. None of them were psychiatrists. They didn't even clean the floors at the Maudsley. So how could three humble songwriters develop such a sophisticated theory of staying sane 40 years in advance of Raj? Makes you think, eh?

We're straying into Francis Wheen territory here. Francis off-loaded a few of his ANTs about Raj in *The Guardian* – most pertinently, that he appeared to be paid a lot of money for stating the obvious – but, in my new-found positive mood, I think he was being a little unfair. Part of the reason why Raj is so ubiquitous is that he can do what most consultants can't – translate med-speak into plain English.

Anthony Clare is also very good at this, although he perhaps appeals to a slightly more sophisticated audience. And Oliver James, too, can raise in a broad audience (although his honest appraisal of "Diana-bysteria" may have knocked a chunk out of his popularity).

In short, psychiatry and clinical psychology are served with good media communication at the moment. Less certain is whether what they say or write makes a difference.

Raj's book contains "proven ways to

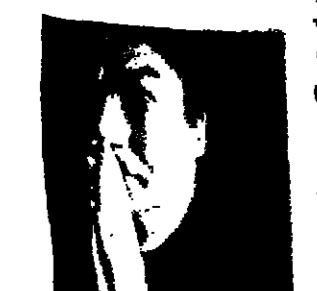
strengthen your mind and reduce your vulnerability to distress – for good" and I genuinely hope it does help its readers to stay sane. This isn't just because I'm discussing a deal with the same publisher, but because I find it very hard to accentuate the positive side of psychiatric services in the UK.

Resources are so stretched that urgent admission to hospital seems possible only for those who are psychotic and in danger of killing themselves or others. Even then, they can't all get in. It's even been suggested that those who say they'll kill themselves shouldn't all be admitted, because it's of them. A few deaths may be a price we'll have to pay for saving resources.

For the great majority of those with less severe illness, provision is patchy and non-existent. Indeed, psychological distress is so badly handled that it's diverted to physical specialists. Sixty per cent of a neurologist's referral case load is tension headache; 50 per cent of a gynaecologist's is pelvic pain; 80 per cent of a gastroenterologist's is irritable bowel; 80 per cent of coronary artery investigations are completely normal.

Many of the sufferers have physical manifestations of psychological distress, but there isn't the training, organisation, time or resources to keep people away from the disastrous slope of unnecessary physical investigations. In essence, if you've got psychological problems in the UK, you're better off treating yourself. And Dr Raj knows it.

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VITAL SIGNS

Mum-friendly

Birth has become an over-medicalised experience for women which deprives them of full participation in one of the most significant events in their lives, according to a charity.

The Association for Improvements in Maternity Services says women are being falsely reassured about the safety of procedures including epidurals, caesarians and foetal monitoring. It says the "cascade of interventions", including apparently harmless ones such as breaking the waters, can lead to other harmful interventions.

Calling for the development of the mother-friendly hospital, it says women never forget birth experiences: while kindness and compassion stay in the memory so do cruelty, technocratic arrogance and coercion.

No room

More patients were admitted to hospital last year than ever before – and more beds were closed. The number of admissions rose 1 per cent between 1995-96 and 1996-97 from

11.2 to 11.3 million (finished consultant episodes), while the number of beds fell 3.6 per cent from 206,000 to 199,000. Bed use increased with almost 40 patients treated in each bed over the year. Overall, more than four out of five NHS beds was occupied every night.

Kiss catching

US scientists have reported what is believed to be the first case of transmission of the Aids virus by "deep kissing." A 20 year old man, who had never had sex, apparently was infected from a bite on his lip during a prolonged kiss. It is known that saliva can carry the virus but until now there has been no such case known. Doctors reporting the case in Archives of Internal Medicine said although it could not be proved transmission had occurred in this way, it appeared possible.

WHO says

There is no cause for concern about the amount of radiation used in irradiated food, the World Health Organisation says. If the sensory qualities of food are retained and harmful micro-organisms are destroyed, the amount of ionising radiation applied is of secondary importance.

Dr Terry Roberts, former head of microbiology at the Institute of Food Research in Reading, who chaired a meeting on food irradiation jointly organised by the WHO, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation and the International Atomic Energy Agency said: "We are quite satisfied with existing scientific evidence that higher doses of radiation can provide wholesome, nutritious and safe food," he said. The techniques is used in 30 countries including the UK.

Last gasp

16 to 24 year olds smoke more than any other age group. A third are regular smokers and three out of four of these smoke more than 10 cigarettes a day, according to the Health Education Authority.

Many college students said they regarded smoking as part of their traditional "reckless and carefree" student image and reckoned they would give up when they left college.

Notice to Halifax Visa Charity Card Customers.

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TRINITY ROAD
WILFREY



23 SEPTEMBER 1997

Chris Patten is a man without a job. The Conservatives are a party in pain. Are these two facts somehow related? Louise Jury considers his present and his future

We all remember the sight of Chris Patten, a respected, sympathetic, clever man weeping as the Union Flag came down over Hong Kong; he had come to the end of an impossible job at which, by most people's lights, he had acquitted himself well; we remember his charming wife and three beautiful daughters standing to attention and dressed to kill in designer minidresses; a family fine enough to set against the Blairs

This week, in William Hague's time of trouble, they have come into the minds of many Tories. And, with this paper's jolly tale of Mr and Mrs Patten holidaying with the Majors at the home of the Conservative arch-plotter Tristam Garel-Jones in Spain to titillate them, he is much in their thoughts. The question is whether the Tory party and its leadership are in his.

One who observed him closely in Hong Kong said he was "completely exhausted" when he left and "pretty fed up". His parting words in Hong Kong were "I'm going to France - to write a book, to tend to my garden and to recharge my batteries" as he starts to splutter damply like an old car on a cold wet morning.

And that is exactly what he has been doing. With Lavender, his wife of 26 years, he retired to the beautiful old stone farmhouse they bought two years ago at St Martin-Languepie near Albi, the birthplace of Toulouse-Lautrec, in the south.

When a month or so later, a journalist negotiated the wilderness near the hideaway to grab a word, Lavender politely and patiently explained that her husband was doing the ordinary job of shopping at the supermarket. "He just wants to be left alone," she said. And so he has been. He has laid flagstones to create a garden dining patio, planted fruit trees and dug up nettles. Undoubtedly, as a keen tennis player - and anxious weight-watcher - he will have been making the most of his new court. He is thought to be hesitant about a return to politics.



Governor, garden, pastures new

itics and Lavender, a barrister who had her own successful family practice before they left, is also thought to have her reservations. Yet he did leave the prospect open when he turned down a peerage in Major's resignation honours.

And he has been writing his book on Hong Kong and Asia for which the publishers HarperCollins paid a rumoured £100,000 advance.

Whatever his wing of the Conservative Party may wish, he is not a man who needs to hurry. His writing could take at least until the end of the year. He was paid £238,000 in his final years in Hong Kong with £55,000 a year expenses. He left office with a £275,000 tax-free gratuity and, it might be assumed, is not desperate for a new job yet.

But at some point he and Lavender will return to Britain, not to the converted Methodist chapel which was their home in Bath when that was his constituency but to London. After

much hunting, they bought an attractive Victorian three-storey six-bedroom house with a large garden in Barnes, a desirable part of south-west London with easy access to Westminster. His youngest daughter, Alice, 17, is due to begin reading languages at Cambridge University. His elder daughters, Kate, 24, and Laura, 22, both work in the media. Kate in television for Esther Rantzen, Laura as a beauty assistant for the glossy magazine *Harpers and Queen*.

Will they find themselves the daughters of a man who has set his cap at the Conservative Party in the hope of becoming Prime Minister? "He's quite fastidious about not wanting to be parachuted back in with a by-election," said one insider.

Though the seats of John Major and Michael Heseltine have been mentioned as possibilities. "He wouldn't want anyone to stand down for him."

And the Conservative Party, at this moment, riven by con-



A match for the Blairs? Chris Patten in his garden in France and with daughters

Main picture: P Parrot/Sygma

flict and facing a government with a massive majority, is not the most attractive proposition for a man who has other options.

"The thing about Patten," says one who knows him well, "is he does believe that big jobs are important. He might well want to be Prime Minister but in a choice between waiting in opposition for three terms and having something like a big job in Europe, there's no doubt

which he would prefer." His name, like Kenneth Clarke's, has been mooted as a potential successor to Jacques Santer, though he would have to become a European commissioner first.

Patten gave his all to his post in Hong Kong and the observer thinks Patten enjoyed the international stage. "If he had his way, he would want a big international job - he thought overseas development minister

was the best job he had at Westminster. But he knows the big ones are largely in the gift of the government of the day and he's not flavour of the month with them."

Patten must have thought when he went to Hong Kong that he was leaving his political career behind him, but the Tory world he left was very different from the one he would return to. His friend John Major was Prime Minister then and the Labour Party had hardly started to shake itself into newness. But politics would never have been far from his thoughts. He is at heart a politician, as he has been since student days.

"He's got the politics bug," says an insider who watched him closely throughout his time in Hong Kong. "All the time he was here he was immensely interested in the minutiae of British politics." He could not have guessed until very recently how interested British politics would become in him.

Ruth Picardie, who died yesterday, age 33, wrote extensively and wittily on the features pages of 'The Independent'. In October 1993 a TV documentary revealed to her what Thatcher had and Major lacked

Dear handbag,

So farewell then, trusted friend. Your week has been chock-full of photo ops. You have starred in numerous newspaper headlines. Last night you appeared on *Thatcher: The Downing Street Years*. These are the poignant, dying embers of your career. But you will not be forgotten.

It is true - to quote another famous Lady, one created by Oscar Wilde - you were only a handbag. You didn't come from the house of Chanel but from British faithfuls, Aquascutum or Rayne. You were made not from ostrich or boa constrictor but from boring, basic cow. And you didn't respond to the whims of fashion. In the day, you were a black or navy structured bag with two handles. In the evening you were a small pochette in black velvet, silver or gold (Denis does like a bit of glitter, your owner confessed in 1986).

You were never a star, always one of a team. Even the black patent, the favourite, was frequently replaced. According to Cynthia Crawford, your owner's PA: "We always have half a dozen on the go. They get quite a bashing."

You also got a bashing from the press. You became a verb meaning to nag, to bully, to shout down, to sack. Last year the speaker of the Irish Dail banned the expression on the grounds that it was unparliamentary.

But, dear handbag, do not despair. You had many fans. A suitcase retailer from Bushey Heath bought you (the beige you) for £2,000 at an auction for Capital Radio's Help a London Child. Your owner loved you deeply, even though she doesn't give you an index entry in her memoirs. Like Denis, you were a rock to her: mute and loyal. You were vital to her as a symbol, a constant reminder that the Thatcher revolution was, in the end, the good housekeeping learnt by a grocer's daughter. Your owner's voice got deeper, her policies tougher, but you remained, reminding the world that the boss was a lady.

You were, of course, a Freudian's dream. You were variously described as lethal (*The Sun*), loaded (*Daily Mirror*), long-range (*The Independent*) and steel-reinforced (*Economist*). Once, you were pump action (*The Guardian*).

But, like all handbags, you were also a big, scary vagina with teeth. The nation was obsessed by what was inside you. Never mind lipstick; at various times you were rumoured to contain: (a) the 1942 Beveridge report on social insurance; (b) the 1944 White Paper on Employment; and (c) Abraham Lincoln's 1863 Gettysburg Address. A handbag? You were the world's first political Tardis.

Without you, British political life is less vivid. John Major, like most British men, is fearful about the link between handbags and homosexuality. And so he is without a metaphor. Lady Thatcher herself, in a brave effort to prop up her successor's leadership, urged him to use a cricket bat at an EC summit. The metaphor did not take off. What is a politician without a metaphor? What is a prime minister without a handbag?



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Searching for my dad, I found Austin Powers

REVELATIONS



The time: 1995
The place: Los Angeles
The man: Mike Myers, film star

My parents came to Canada in 1956, from Liverpool, and I grew up in a very English household. I thought I was related to the Beatles growing up, because my mum and dad talked like the Beatles. My parents

were kind of famous because they had the British accent.

I took dancing lessons when I was little. There was an English pub show called *The Pig And Whistle* on Canadian TV, where everyone sang, "Come in to the Pig and Whistle/Come in/And have a laugh." There was cheeky chappiness and chimney sweep dancers. I remember seeing that as a kid and thinking, "Wow, I wanna be that."

Our was a Scouse house. Across the street was my friend and his parents were from Germany - they had Billy Connolly and all that stuff in their house. New Year's Eve it was a lot of I Love U, I Love U, but as soon as I take my money I'll kill U. It's the same in Liverpool, they have instincts - fight fight fight, love love, sing.

I was really close to my dad. Literally my dad would wake us up if Monty Python or an Ealing comedy or something was on, on a school night. I didn't go to first period for the last five years of high school, because we'd all sit down at the television late. Drink tea, and eat toast, and watch whatever.

The other thing about my dad was - like, when you're in a casino, you play with chips, so you don't think it's real money and therefore you don't mind going down \$400 in a haul. The things that happened during my week weren't real either until I went home. I did my laundry every Sunday in Toronto, and my dad would say, "What did you do this week?" And I would say "blah blah blah" and it would seem real.

When he got Alzheimer's I started to see his personality leave his body. His personality left his body completely the year before he died. It was an insidiously slow process. And at the same time that's happening I'm on *Saturday Night Live* and making *Wayne's World*. My father passed away in '91. My heart was broken. I worked

steadily for two years. Then my contract for *Saturday Night Live* was up - we have a six-year contract. *Wayne's World 2* was a Number One movie and it done real well - I had lots of offers. At the same time my father gets killed in a car accident and both her sets of grandparents die. So all the time it's like Spielberg calls or somebody you love has died. It was all happening together.

I spoke to Bill Murray, who hosted one of the last shows before I left. He said he'd taken two years off. He'd gone to France to the Sorbonne, because his mother had died and he was emotionally incapacitated. He told me about that and I said, "Well, what's my equivalent of studying at the Sorbonne?" And I thought, "Well, I'll take a year off and I'll take ice hockey lessons."

So I took what's known as power skating lessons from nine to five every Wednesday, and played pick-up hockey two times a week with animators and firemen on disability and stuff. That's what I did, and I read books and I went and saw movies. We bought a house, we backed off, we nested. After then, my wife and I were living in suitcases in hotel rooms in LA and in a tiny apartment in New York - paying lots of money.

During my year off, I looked into the whole deal of my ancestry, part Scottish, part North Irish, part Southern Irish, and England. I came to Liverpool and saw where my dad went to school. I saw where he signed on the Territorial Army. A really nice guy from the Royal Engineers sent me my dad's war record. So I went to places he was stationed. I just really came to terms with his death.

I think at a certain point I got so close to him - he was so funny, he was very silly. His two ma-

jom sayings, that I think are undervalued, were, "Everything is gonna be okay" and "Let's go have some fun." So anything crappy that would happen, he would be like, "You know, everything's gonna be okay, let's go have some fun." And I think those are two really important things, but when that dies out and you're left by yourself, and you're so busy, and then all of a sudden you're a famous person ... well, it's weird.

My dad sold encyclopedias - the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. I wear my dad's encyclopedias salesman-of-the-year ring, from 1967, which was my wedding ring, because he couldn't come. He died before my wedding.

A year and a half ago I was driving home from hockey practice and "The Look of Love" by Burt Bacharach came on the radio and that spoke to my heart. I'm a big Burt fan. It just reminded me of *Casino Royale* and that whole era, and I just started fooling around with English accents: "Yeah, but let's go in the back and sha-aa." Pretending I was taking photographs of my wife: "Give it to me, baby, show me your shoulder, love it, yeah." I did that for three days to make my wife laugh. My wife's from Queens, she's quite blunt, and she said: "That's really funny, now shaddap." She said I should write it down, so I wrote a script in three weeks, and it became *Austin Powers*.

The movie is a tribute to my dad, and to the whole British pop culture and comedy. If someone said my next 1,000 pictures had to be *Austin Powers* movies I'd be only too happy. I had a blast doing it.

Taking that year off proved to be the smartest thing I ever did, and in two years I plan to take another five months off.

Interview by Richard Tyrell

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'I recorded it all as history unfolding, believing that it could never happen again'

Biafra, Bangladesh, Vietnam: name any of the world's tragedies of the past 20 years, and likely as not Don McCullin broke the news. But what are we to make of these images when taken off the front page and pinned up in a gallery? By Tom Lubbock

Don McCullin's pictures are not what they were. Take the picture on this page. When it first appeared in print, it was an immediate bulletin from the world, an urgent appeal crying out of its emergency, designed to appeal and to baffle the conscience of its original viewers. And today it's different. It's not news, it's art. Not, of course, that such a photo couldn't be taken somewhere in the contemporary world, but this one wasn't. It's a "classic" image, a Don McCullin picture, an example of an *avant*-garde nothing. It's become partly a historical document, and partly a fixed emblem, reflecting a timeless and universal theme: human suffering.

There are about 200 pictures in the Barbican's McCullin retrospective, "Sleeping with Ghosts". The majority represent his 20 years working as a photojournalist, from the mid-Sixties to the mid-Eighties, on assignments to the world's disaster areas. Cyprus, Biafra, Londonderry, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Cambodia, Beirut: this is McCullin's roster, and the exhibition's all those place-names that have become general names for crisis and tragedy. And all McCullin's most powerful shots are here: the Cypriot widow caught in a convulsion of grief, the young Biafran mother with a baby sucking her withered breast, the stick-legged Biafran albino boy, the dumb shell-shocked GI, the abandoned Bangladeshi baby crying in the road – the images which have put a memorable face to suffering for this generation.

But this seems the wrong way of putting

it, too much like art. Praising the pictures' power and memorability, don't we treat the subject as if it were only a contribution to that power? Don't we risk substituting the photographer's vision, the photographer's "face", for the faces he witnessed? Shouldn't the claims of the subject come first? The distinction isn't so easy to make. It was McCullin's camera, his professional vocation and his personal courage that helped to make those names. And if his own name became in its time a by-word, his presence a guarantee, of a situation's urgency and gravity, then McCullin very largely created his subject. Few photographers before him had brought this news so forcefully and immediately. The proper question is: what kind of news was it, and is it?

Looking back, McCullin himself has drawn a desperate lesson: "I recorded it all as history unfolding, believing that this could never happen again, but it has and it will. I am under no illusions now. Humanity will go on suffering to the end of time." The statement is quoted on a large wall-caption in the exhibition, and thus given a kind of summary authority. And it's true that, when seen all together, in retrospect, in an art gallery, this is the lesson that the pictures tend to bear. As you go round the show, from one catastrophe to another, human suffering looks like something that keeps on happening. Each picture is one more updating verification of this permanent, proverbial truth. That's its "news".

At the same time, this lesson must seem too proverbial, too general, too accepting, too near to the chairman who's ever ready with a topical crisis prayer ("We think especially at this time of the people of Bosnia and Rwanda...") and never daunted by the way each year the dotted line can be filled with some new name. The kind of suffering McCullin bore witness to, it wasn't just suffering, it had its causes: it wasn't just humanity either, it was particular sections of humanity. And even if humanity will go on suffering to the end of time, that hardly

diminishes an obligation to relieve it, prevent it, question it, protest against it. A sense of that obligation was surely what the pictures were first designed to awaken and enforce.

Not entirely. There is a split here, which runs through McCullin's work. His images are torn between two modes of address –

between shock and contemplation. Nor is this merely the work of time or the effect of seeing them in a gallery (reportage becoming art, the contemporary passing). The photos had this "contemplative" aspect from the start: at odds with their urgent appeals, but a function of them too.

The paradox is almost inherent. To communicate suffering most directly, one must put a face to it, concentrate on immediate victims, and thus concentrate on suffering as such. McCullin's vision is close-up, in the midst of things, on individuals. But not exactly on individuals: the agony envelops everything. There's little to indicate lives beyond the immediate circumstances or the abnormality of these circumstances. His subjects are identified with their fate. His strongest pictures use a kind of allegorical portraiture. The subjects acknowledge the camera, stand cen-

tered, half pose for it. This alleviates any feeling of voyeurism, of images stolen. It confers a dignity on degradation. But it also makes the people seem to present and perform their suffering for us, to become its living symbols, personifications of hunger, grief, violation, endurance.

In the chaos of misery and conflict, McCullin finds modern *Pietàs*, Martyrs showing their wounds, Dead Christs. He holds them in compositions of great solidity and solemnity, which establish their instants as fixed tableaux. He prints them in grave, dark textures that fuse the sight witnessed on to the picture surface. And all these devices put out of mind the chanciness and partialness of the camera's relation to the world, a world whose causes and circumstances aren't and often can't be photographed. They make the camera's glimpses look like they were always meant

To 14 Dec, Barbican Centre, London WC1 (0171-382 7105)

to be images, and they make the images look complete in themselves.

This is what gives his photos their lasting power, but it's also what gives them their immediate effect. They appealed through speaking a permanent language of torment and pathos. Or rather: they filled old pictures with new realities, gave them the jolt of news. But the forms remain religious, the types of a world-view in which suffering has a place.

So, as you go round this exhibition, you fall into a steady attitude that seems quite natural. Not indifferent, not flinching, not exactly consuming it, but not protesting against it either: above all, *not wishing it otherwise*: you simply contemplate it, trying to absorb it, to take its measure, as something well-known but right to be dwelt on. It is a kind of wonder – and of course there's a way in which these horrors and catastrophes can become world-wonders – with, all the while, a troubling consciousness that this attitude is deeply wrong.

There isn't an obvious means of resolving this split perspective. It seems pointless to accuse McCullin of "aesthetising" suffering, or making a "spectacle" of it. True, even within the limits of what photography can show about the world, he might have worked differently, made images that looked less inevitable. And true, there does seem something mad about us viewers giving our solemn attention to a gallery of past horrors which by definition we can do nothing about, when present horrors might equally fill these walls. What should we say that McCullin's work, having done its job, or not done its job, ought simply to be put away? That keeping it on view is actually dangerous, because it can now only dull the conscience, by making such outrages seem familiar and expected, by establishing a genre of image-and-response that all new photographs of new outrages will settle into in their turn?

Perhaps all true. But McCullin's pictures tell a truth too. Not necessarily that humanity will suffer to the end of time, but that some kinds of suffering, in their extremity and absoluteness, can only be known and contemplated – and that in this sense there's nothing to be done about them. It is a quasi-religious truth, and there's nothing to be done with it either: not the whole truth, a truth very liable to comfortable corruption, a truth which the arts are all too good at telling. But still, McCullin's work should be praised for it – though not too loudly or eagerly.

To 14 Dec, Barbican Centre, London WC1 (0171-382 7105)



Putting a memorable face to suffering: 'Refugee from East Pakistan on the Indian border'
© Don McCullin

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"ONE OF THE FUNNIEST AND MOST PURELY ENTERTAINING OF ALL THE RECENT DISNEY FEATURES"
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LONDON GALLERIES RICHARD INGLEBY

Art houses join force to give prints a better image

A Century of European Prints

Printmaking, for some reason that no one can ever quite explain, is very rarely given as much critical attention as the other arts.

It tends to be viewed as a secondary activity: something that painters and sculptors do when they're not painting or sculpting, but not really worth considering in its own right. Artists disagree of course, as do print dealers, and for the next month six London galleries specialising in prints have joined forces in the hope that a clutch of exhibitions will succeed where so often a single show has failed.

The exhibitions, grouped under the title "A Century of European Prints", start with the years 1890-1935 at The Fine Art Society in New Bond Street, where the emphasis of the show is firmly on artists as expert printmakers, rather than trawling through the century's most glittering careers gathering works that happen to be prints.

Inevitably, though, there are many big names here, from Picasso and Matisse to Klee and Kandinsky, but many of the best exhibits are by the British artists who spearheaded the etching revival which took place in this country in the Twenties.

DY Cameron's fantastically solemn landscape *Ben Ledi* is one of the great images of its

time and, a little earlier, Nevinson's *From an Office Window* is a match for any of his Continental colleagues.

At Lumley Cazalet in Davies Street, the years 1925-1970 have a more determinedly European feel. There's lots of Picasso, the only artist to make it into all six venues, and Chagall, who, as ever, looks a bit will o' the wisp – he needs a more substantial medium. On the evidence here, Matisse is also a disappointing printmaker. His odalisques and girls on flowered divans are stylish enough, but they look more like mechanically reproduced drawings than images which set out to be lithographs.

Braque fares rather better: his little swan, *Le Cygne*, 1947, worked over with black and white and grey gouache is one of the stars of the Lumley Cazalet selection, as is a later lithograph of a bird silhouetted over a green square. Another Braque bird appears in William Weston's selection of prints from the same period, along with more Matisse, Chagall, Picasso and a number of less expected images including Magritte's splendidly surreal *The Green Eye*.

More surprising still is the selection at the Mercury Gallery in Cork Street, where a very different exhibition concentrates on the likes of Pierre Alechinsky, Jacques Dufet and Johnny Friedlaender: little known members of a post-war



Taking flight: Georges Braque's *Le Cygne*, 1947

avant-garde. Alongside these are more familiar images by British artists, including linocuts by Sybil Andrews and Cyril Power, and a fine lithograph, *Cornish Harbour*, by William Scott, one of the best printmakers to work in this country since the Second World War, but surprisingly given only this single image in the galleries.

Next door to the Mercury Gallery at Alan Cristea, space is at an even greater premium as the story is brought up to date from 1960 to 1997. Picasso and Braque are squeezed in again, next to a large *Flowering Palm* by Howard Hodgkin and a nude by Colin Self, the marks made by rolling a naked model across the etching plate. Beuys, Baselitz and Tapias are shown by a single work apiece, although there are three of Naum Gabo's elegantly stripped-down studies of form and space, and two wonderful, simple abstractions by the Spaniard Eduardo Chillida.

The contemporaries continue at Marlborough Graph-

ics in Albemarle Street with a selection that includes Eduardo Paolozzi's complex woodcuts from his 1975 *Charles Rennie Mackintosh* suite, and two sombre but rather beautiful etchings by Anish Kapoor. Frank Auerbach's etched head of Lucian Freud is one of the best things here, with, of course, Freud himself. Two etchings by Therese Oulton, one of the galleries' younger artists, were awaited, literally hot off the press, the day I was there.

I'm not sure that I'd recommend seeing all six bits of the show at once, there's rather too much to take in, but it is an ambitious and largely successful project which should help to raise the profile of a too-often neglected art.

The Fine Art Society (0171-629 5116); Lumley Cazalet (0171-491 4767); Mercury Gallery (0171-734 7800); William Weston (0171-493 0722); Alan Cristea (0171-439 1866); Marlborough Graphics (0171-629 5161). Until 10 October

Ruth Picar

Ruth Picar
born 1924
married 1974 Mark
London 22 September 1997

DEATHS

Viscount Tonypandy

Thomas George Thomas, politician born 29 January 1909; MP (Labour) for Cardiff Central 1945-50, Cardiff West 1950-83; PPS to Minister of Aviation 1951; member, Chairman's Panel, House of Commons 1951-64; Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office 1964-66; Minister of State, Welsh Office 1966-67; Minister of State, Commonwealth Office 1967-68; Secretary of State for Wales 1968-70; PC 1968; deputy Speaker and Chairman of Ways and Means, House of Commons 1964-76; Speaker of the House of Commons 1976-83; created 1983 Viscount Tonypandy; chairman, Bank of Wales 1985-91; died Cardiff 22 September 1997.

George Thomas was the first Speaker of the House of Commons to be known by the whole nation: known, and loved too. In 1978, two years after his appointment, the BBC began broadcasting *Today in Parliament* and its opening call "Order! Order!", declaimed in Thomas's rolling Rhondda accent, became a national catchphrase.

The broadcast provided most people with their first experience of how Parliament is conducted and how Mr Speaker could exert his authority over rebellious MPs by good-humoured and witty intervention. Within a week, a star was born. Speaker Thomas had become a national institution. And it was, of course, his gratifying apotheosis, after what he had wrongly felt to be a chequered political career.

George Thomas had been a lively, eloquent, busy MP in the 1945 parliament, a member of the committed chairman's panel and first chairman of the Welsh Grand Committee. But, unlike his fellow member for Cardiff, James Callaghan, he was not offered even junior office. Nineteen years passed before he was rewarded and even then Harold Wilson could not fulfil his intention to make him Chairman of Ways and Means and deputy Speaker. The Labour majority was only five and a deputy Speaker renounces his party vote, a loss the Government could not afford.

Thomas was consoled first with a junior post at the Home Office and then as Minister of State at the Welsh Office. Later, as Minister of State at the Commonwealth Office, he enjoyed travelling the world and proved to be rather good at sorting out difficult African leaders whose temperament was more akin to that of the warm, vulnerable Welshman than to that of the average reserved Englishman. It was however in the United States, in Georgia,

that a preacher said it all: "His face is white but his heart is as black as ours."

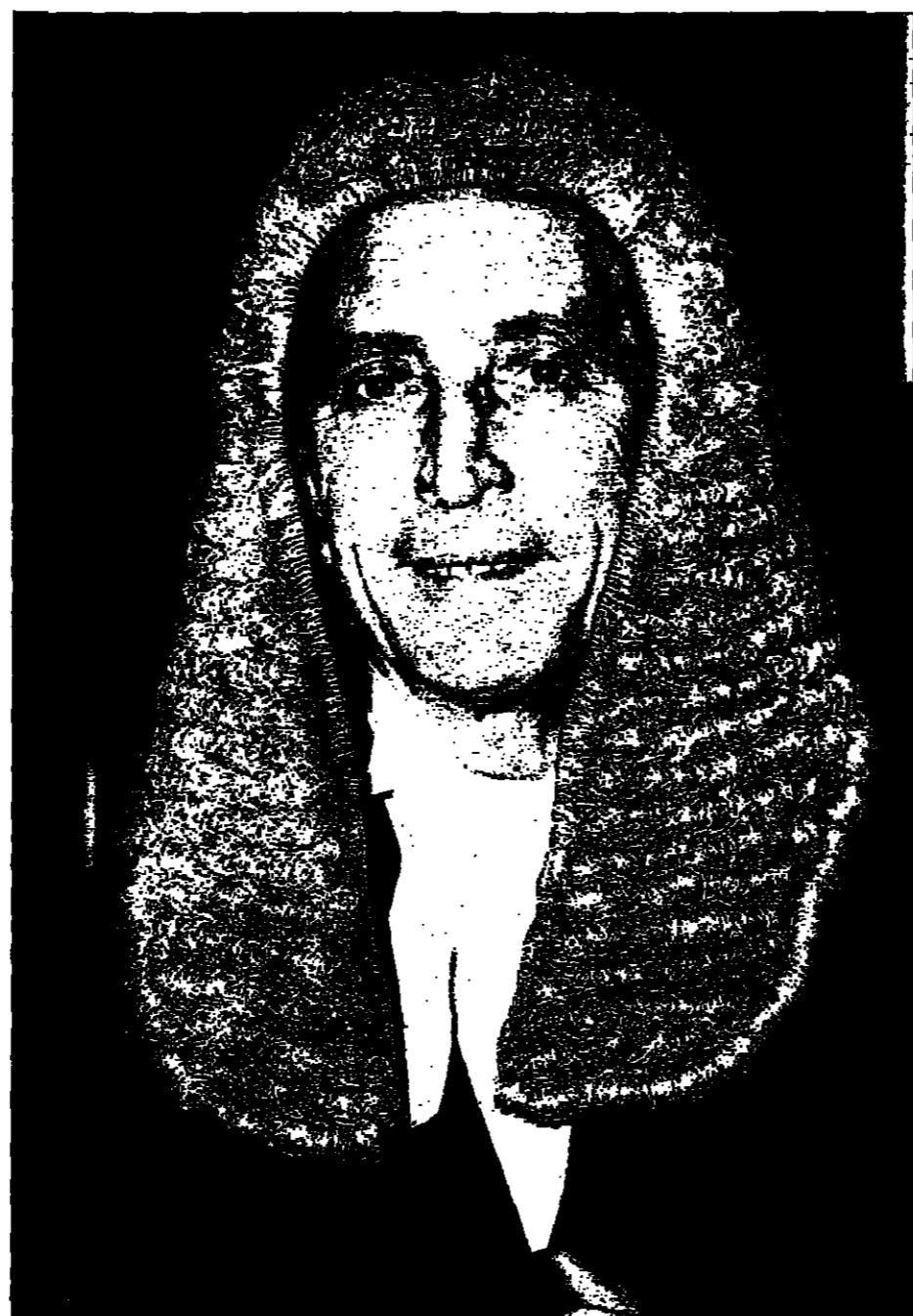
At last, in 1968, he entered the Cabinet as Secretary of State for Wales. It was a difficult time for the Welsh Office. Welsh nationalism was growing, particularly linguistic nationalism, and there was a tiny fringe threatening violence. Thomas, like many of his compatriots, had no enthusiasm for the nationalist cause. Moreover he had an English mother, and so had not nearly enough of the Welsh language, some people felt, for a man chosen to be the Welsh Secretary of State.

The tension grew as the investiture of the Prince of Wales drew closer. Thomas's life was constantly threatened. His bungalow was plastered with Welsh-language posters and leaflets and he was attacked in religious newspapers and even from the pulpit. The Prince of Wales was due to spend a preparatory term at Aberystwyth and the academics feared that it would be dangerous. The Secretary of State had a heavy responsibility but the police were confident enough and the Special Branch did all that was necessary around Caernarfon Castle for the ceremony itself.

When Labour was re-elected in 1974, George Thomas was 65. He fully expected to return to the Welsh Office, and to the end of his days he resented the fact that Wilson and Callaghan had failed to warn him that the job was to go to a younger man, and one favoured by the Welsh speakers. The post selected for Thomas was again the Chairmanship of Ways and Means and deputy Speaker. Seeing his disappointment Wilson reminded him that Selwyn Lloyd must surely soon retire, although of course the Speaker cannot be the gift of the Prime Minister.

Mistrusted as he was by the nationalists, George Thomas was the archetypal middle-of-the-road Welsh MP of his generation, formed by the fortifying curriculum of the valley, the pit, the chapel, the temperance movement, the Co-op, the trade union and the Labour Party. He had an expansive personality, a quick mind and all the evangelical skills. Such gifts are not exactly rare in Wales but Thomas had them in profusion; above all, he had the ability to find the words expressed in richly dramatic cadences, that would move any audience.

As a young man Thomas had delivered a free prayer in the presence of a collier who had perfected his English by learning off the entire Book of Psalms. "You should ask yourself tonight whether God wants you to be a preacher," he said. Thomas got an affirmative answer and became a most active



'Order! Order!' George Thomas as Speaker of the House of Commons, 1976

Methodist lay preacher, more eloquent even in the pulpit than on the political platform. I have remembered for years a sermon I heard him preach at the service held before the Labour Party Conference. His theme was the need to treat old people with love and respect as well as justice and he spoke sadly of the contempt he had seen them receive in a certain institution.

The chapel was in his blood. His mother was the daughter of a founder of the English Methodist Church in Tonypandy. Mam Thomas, as she became known, was a heroic woman. At 19, she married a Welsh-speaking miner of the same age and before they reached 30 they had two daughters and three sons. The father took to the bottle, was violent in his cups, and to everyone's relief disappeared into the Army in 1914. Afterwards he went off and acquired another family.

The first family survived intact in a squalid basement as Mrs Thomas took in washing

and sewed long into the night. The daughters went into service at 13 and George's elder brother down the pit at the same age. It was this that made it possible for George to go to secondary school and then to take a teacher training course at Southampton. He remained a teacher until he was 36. Medically graded as "C", he was a part-time special policeman during the Second World War. This left him time to serve as a member of the national executive of the National Union of Teachers and become a runner-up for the presidency.

When he was 16 his mother married again, and happily this time, to a winder at the pit and when he died George bought a bungalow in Cardiff and lived there with her. He took her with him on many engagements and Mam Thomas became the best-known mother in Wales. She was a clinging type. She had been a fluent public speaker and had chaired her ward Labour Party and

co-operative women's guild. She lived to be over 90 and, when she died two months before her other remaining son, George underwent a crisis of religious faith.

It took him over a year to recover. His personality was a triumph over early adversity, yet not quite a complete triumph. Now and then there would emerge a hint of malice, a touch of envy or vanity, only shocking because they came from such an affable man.

On the day they re-opened the school at Aberfan, Thomas and I were riding in the last car of the motorcade. At each stop, the housewives surged around our car and cheered him. "I do wish the Prime Minister could see what they think of me!" Thomas said.

In his autobiography, *Mr Speaker* (1985), Thomas dismayed some old friends by writing with lack of charity about such favourite sons of the party as Foot, Callaghan and Clewyn Hughes. Why did he

and the rest of us? He would later ask himself that question and say, "I wish I'd never written that old book." Was he influenced by the new candour of Crossman's diary? Was he persuaded by some editor to spice up his memoirs? The book did great damage to a man who had gone through life seeking love and soaking up adoration.

It was, however, a book of some historical importance. It revealed the attempts of backbenchers and party leaders to influence the Speaker. It was, it is important to remember, the anguished parliament of 1978 in which he first served as Speaker. He was surprised to receive offensive letters from backbenchers complaining of not being called. He got up in the House, revealed these pressures and warned MPs that such conduct was counter-productive.

Another ploy of the bully boys, he said, was to create a scene if they had not been called after standing up two or three times, hoping that the Speaker would call them next time to avoid a repeat performance. After John Golding had devised the technique of putting down an open question to the Prime Minister which permitted a supplementary question to be asked on any subject, other MPs tried to apply it to other ministers. Speaker Thomas would not allow it, believing – rightly – that it would completely alter the nature of Question Time.

But the Speaker had to face a greater strain. Key people from Government and Opposition would come to sound out what his rulings would be on certain issues; sometimes they would say that a poor view would be taken if he ruled in a particular way. His response was to threaten resignation and to promise that he would explain from the back benches his reasons for doing so. An answer would then be given that nobody wanted to push him around. Some MPs who thought it right for the Speaker to reveal what goes on in general terms could not forgive him for mentioning names and quoting private conversations.

The controversy is covered amply in Michael Foot's book *Loyalists and Lovers* (1986). On

reading an extract from the memoirs, Foot wrote to Thomas to say that publication of confidential conversations was a breach of trust and could only do injury to Parliament. Thomas replied, saying that his whole purpose in writing the book was, like Foot, to be a believer in open government; in revealing the pressures the intention was to make things easier for his successors in the chair.

The subject was aired in the *Times* and Foot agreed that the book could not be compared

with the Crossman diaries because there was a difference between what a Cabinet minister engaged in party controversies may reveal and Mr Speaker, who is pledged to impartiality and independence. Yet Foot says that, although the book was "grotesquely misleading", Thomas was a very good Speaker. He had to deal with a House more narrowly poised between the parties than any of recent times. Yet he kept his head from the start.

The greatest hullabaloo came on the Aircraft and Shipbuilding Industries Bill. When after a long and bitter procedure the Government won by one vote, there was a suspicion that somebody had broken a pair. The Welsh began to sing the "Red Flag" and Michael Heseltine seized the mace. Thomas suspended the House for 20 minutes and on the resumption suspended it again until the following morning. Thus the storm was stilled.

In spite of these difficulties, the Speaker's popularity grew. He adored the ceremonial and people who were invited to the Speaker's House found the experience a delight. After John Golding had devised the technique of putting down an open question to the Prime Minister which permitted a supplementary question to be asked on any subject, other MPs tried to apply it to other ministers. Speaker Thomas would not allow it, believing – rightly – that it would completely alter the nature of Question Time.

The Conservatives kept him as Speaker until 1983. Then he became Viscount Tonypandy, with a hereditary title. This was not appreciated in Wales – although, since he had no heir, it did not matter very much. His coat of arms depicts an open Bible and a miner's lamp flanked by daffodils and the leek. The motto is old Welsh, *Bid Ben Bid Boni*, "Who would let, let him be a bridge", from the *Mabinogion*.

George Thomas took his place, as a former Speaker should, on the cross-benches of the House of Lords. He suffered from cancer of the throat which then broke out elsewhere. After he collapsed at a party at Guildhall to celebrate his 80th birthday, we thought it would be the end. But a few days later, it became known that he was in a private nursing home in Wales, receiving the Prince and Princess and fulfilling one or two public engagements.

John Beavan

George Thomas enjoyed an astonishing Indian summer in public life, living and making the cheerful best of it, as he put it, on "borrowed" time, writes *Tom Doherty*.

He professed himself vastly amused that he had been granted these extra years, and deduced that the extension bestowed on him was proof that his Methodist Almighty had a

wicked sense of humour. How he would have chuckled benevolently, had he known that his obituarist John Beavan had predeceased him by three years.

As Speaker, Thomas was my least favourite of those under whom I have sat – Sir Harry Hyton-Foster, Dr Horace King, Lord Selwyn Lloyd, Lord Weatherill and Madam Speaker Betty Boothroyd. He was capricious and concerned to ingratiate himself to the Prime Minister. He abused the position of Speaker to suppress dissenting opinion on the Falklands War as he judged what was good for Britain; and his judgement coincided with that of Margaret Thatcher. (Some of us could not quite get it out of our minds that Thomas himself had been the Minister of State in the Commonwealth Office when relations with Argentina could have been resolved and weren't.)

No memoirs in recent years

have generated such hurt and then incandescent anger among former friends, particularly MPs sitting for Welsh seats and Welsh Labour activists, as those of Mr Speaker Sir, the memoirs of Viscount Tonypandy. They said that they thought George had been a friend and "then we discovered what he thought of us!" Nor did his endorsement of Sir James Goldsmith's political forays on the European issue endear him to many of his erstwhile colleagues. Though, in his last years, his British nationalism which had always been there, came out uninhibited.

The last time I chatted to Tonypandy – he was a tremendous gossip – was outside St Margaret's, Westminster, following the memorial service for Wing Commander Grant Ferris, his long-serving deputy, in July. Tonypandy raised the subject of devolution and expounded – he always used his hands – that he was quite appalled. He hissed to Cardinal Basil Hume and me (the famous familiar voice of Mr Speaker had long gone): "I love that place" – he pointed to the Commons – "and I've given £100 to the 'Vote No' campaign."

At that moment, the government car which he was rightly given whenever he ventured out drew up. As he clambered into it, Tonypandy's last words to me were "Devolution – abomination, I call it."

As a funeral eulogy speaker Tonypandy was much in demand and superb. Those who were there speak of his moving homilies in the Scilly Isles speaking of how he burnt himself out in the service of his fellow countrymen. Tonypandy in his last decade did the same.

John Beavan (Lord Ardwick)

Ruth Picardie

Ruth Picardie

Ruth Picardie, journalist, born Reading 1 May 1964; married 1994 Matt Seaton (one son, one daughter); died London 22 September 1997.

A few years ago, Ruth Picardie found a lump in her breast, which was diagnosed, after a biopsy, as a benign tumour. In October 1996, when she returned to the hospital with a lump "the size of a golf-ball", she was told that, not only did she have breast cancer, but that it had spread to her lymph nodes. Her chances, they said then, were 50:50. Even the optimist, Picardie took the news on the chin; she was determined to live and, when she did not respond to chemotherapy, except to become very sick, she sought alternative treatments. But, within a few months, the cancer had spread to her bones, her liver, her lungs and her brain. The experts were unsure about which would get her first. "Great," she wrote after reading one of the many books full

of contradictory advice. "I'm going to die, but I'm going to go bonkers first."

Ruth Picardie hated euphemisms, and would not have wanted the facts of her illness to be swaddled in evasive cliché. As a journalist, and as a friend, her honesty cut like a hot knife. She was always pushing the envelope of what could be said, not out of prurience, but because she was one of the most voraciously curious people I have ever met. And she had a theory about everything.

So she wrote about the indignities of IVF treatment (after two and a half years of trying to have a baby, Picardie successfully underwent IVF and, in August 1995, gave birth to twins), the fuddleness of diet gurus (she was an avowed foodie and chocaholic and worried about being fat), she scrutinised the absurdities and ironies of being a postmodernist, post-feminist babe of the Nineties".

In the Eighties, she had demonstrated against the US bombing of Libya and supported the miners' strike; as the decade came to an end, she realised she was a member of the last ideologically driven generation, and brought into her writing many of the questions that trouble this new age. She had the rare gift of making politics

breathe, and because she had such a sense of fun, and such a wide frame of reference, you found yourself reading everything she wrote to the end.

Picardie was also a generous and sensitive editor. Friends who worked with her early in her career, when she edited the film trade magazine the *Producer*, or worked at the short-lived women's magazine *Minabella*, remember her as being direct and clear about what she wanted. In the 18 months that Picardie worked as an editor at the *Independent*, she was unfailingly encouraging, full of ideas and determined to get the best out of everybody. If you were down, she would dust you off and make you shine.

Though she loved to gossip and giggle, she never said to malice, and in an industry where backstabbing, mild hysteria and one-upmanship are routine, she was a calm hand at the tiller. Her candour made some people curl, but they never became her enemies. Ruth Picardie met her hus-

band, the freelance journalist Matt Seaton, as a teenager at Cambridge University. (She was the first student from her school, Llanishen High in Cardiff, to get to Cambridge, where she read Anthropology at King's.) Her friends thought of theirs as an exemplary relationship, not because it was without difficulties, but because they had managed to evolve together and be comfortable together.

Their wedding, on a summer's day three years ago, was held in the garden of Matt's parents' house in Sussex. To the guesst (which included her sister Justine, also a journalist, and both of her parents, who had divorced long ago), sitting on blankets on the lawn, it all seemed perfect. Ruth, in a white linen Nicole Farhi dress (even in the last weeks of her life, Ruth found the energy to go shopping: it was another of her passions), spoke simply and eloquently of her love for Matt, and her oldest friend gave a speech which ended with Ruth's being pelted with chocolates.

As well as a celebration of Ruth and Matt's life together, they made it a celebration of their friendships, too.

Ruth believed that her IVF treatment had accelerated the cancer – and was angry that she had not been informed of the risks. But she said, her twins, Lola and Joe, were "the meaning of life". In her penultimate column for the *Observer*, she wrote of her sadness at not having a future, of not seeing them grow up and of not being remembered. "How," she asked, "do you write the definitive love letter to a partly imaginary child?" She concluded by saying that "life will continue just fine".

She was right, of course, but for all of us who were proud to love her it will be that bit less brilliant.

- Helen Birch

In 1993 I began to notice the byline of a young freelance writer called Ruth Picardie, writes *Hilary Jones*. Her pieces were stylish, cultured, knowing and very witty – just what we want

on the feature pages of the *Independent*.

In October that year both colleagues and readers started to enjoy her presence on the paper on a very regular basis. She wrote funny self-deprecating first-person pieces; acerbic but never vitriolic commentary on the fastest fashion fads and cultural trends; interviews with writers, film and book reviews. When she became a mother, pregnancy, childbirth, parenthood all became the raw material that Ruth could hone into pieces that made you laugh, weep, groan and rage. And almost invariably to impossibly tight deadlines.

Not long after Ruth arrived she was asked at very short notice to stand in for Miles King – a challenge that even the most experienced journalists might shy away from. But Ruth, still only 29, faced the task with aplomb and enthusiasm – producing a series of brilliantly funny sketches on the mixed pleasures of a family Christmas. By November 1994 she was

Ruth Picardie

no euphemisms

on the staff as an assistant features editor, while continuing to write. She left the paper in July 1995 to have her twins, but a few months later was writing again, as a freelance, and in summer 1996 she again became a regular contributor until this summer she became ill to write.

Her last piece was to be about Daisy and Tom, the new children's store recently opened by Tim Waterstone. She would interview Waterstone and then visit the shop to do some fly-on-the-wall colour writing. The interview she managed, but she never made it to the shop,

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

CRASIER: At Devizes Hospital, on 18 September 1997, after a short illness, John Nigel Shatto, aged 75 years. Much-loved father of Andrew, Alexandra and Alison. A loving grandfather. The funeral will take place at St Mary's, Market Lavington, at 2.30pm on 25 September. Flowers or donations in lieu, if desired, for CAFOD, 19 White Street, Market Lavington, Wiltshire SN10 4DP.

BIRTHS

Mr Tony Balding, racehorse trainer, 61; Mr Ray Charles, rhythm and blues singer, 67; Baroness David, former government whip, 84; Lord Feldman, chairman, Better Business Opportunities, 71; Mr James Guinness, former deputy chairman, Guinness Peat, 73; Mr Julio Iglesias, musician, 54; Mr Richard Lambert, Editor, *Financial Times*, 53; Sir Gordon Lonsdale, President, Yorkshire Post Newspapers, 77; Dr Brian Lloyd, chairman of directors, Oxford Gallery, 77; Mrs Genia McIntosh, incoming executive director, Royal National Theatre, 51; The Right Rev Michael Mankelow, former Bishop of Basingstoke, 70; Mr Larry Mize, golfer, 39; Mr Mickey Rooney, singer and songwriter, 48; Mr Jeff Squire, rugby player, 46; Sir Roger Tolson, High Court judge, 51; Admiral Sir John Treacher, 73; Mr John Wilkinson, MP, 57; Mr Nicholas Witchell, television news presenter, 44.

BIRTHDAYS

Mr Tony Balding, racehorse trainer, 61; Mr Ray

The euro is on its way and Blair must get off the fence



EDITOR: ANDREW MARR.
DEPUTY EDITOR: COLIN HUGHES.
ADDRESS: 1 CANADA SQUARE,
CANARY WHARF,
LONDON E14 5DL
TELEPHONE: 0171 293 2000
OR 0171 345 2000
FAX: 0171 293 2435
OR 0171 345 2435

Anybody who was asked would undoubtedly have predicted a strong showing by the Social Democrats in Hamburg's municipal elections at the weekend. The city is one of the strongest areas in the whole of Germany for the SPD - normally a true stronghold. But the main left party lost swathes of ground: although the party retained control of the council, the scale of the damage was sufficient for victory to look like defeat. Suddenly the federal German political landscape looks very different. The national opinion polls say voters trust the Christian Democrat coalition more than the red-green option that the German system would throw up as an alternative. The CDU-CSU's chances are likely to be further improved if the economy continues on the recovery track. Chancellor Kohl, aka Houdini, is set to run in the federal elections next year and win.

We might prefer the Germans to choose the SDP moderniser Gerhard Schröder as a more attractive chancellor

than Helmut Kohl, who, however meritorious his former service, is past his sell-by date as the leader of 21st-century Germany. The Hamburg result, if it is symptomatic, has worrying elements, in particular the failure of the SPD to renew itself in voters' eyes and the inflated level of support for the far right. But these are matters principally for Germans: the election also has consequences for us and specifically for the policy of benign neglect with which, since May, the Blair government has been allowed to treat European monetary union.

Now that the odds on Chancellor Kohl being in office next May are so much higher, the Kohl version of Europe's future looks virtually certain to stick. European money will be created according to the Maastricht timetable on 1 January 1999. Worrying about the Italians or the exact size of the German deficit will not stop the wagon. "Wait and see" starts to look less a policy of cautious wisdom, and

increasingly a position of wary indecision. It would not be cowardly for Britain to decline entry into the single currency, but it is pusillanimous not to tell the British people what our intentions are, and - if that is what we ultimately intend - when we might join. If the pound were to be locked into a Euro-equivalent value, the amount would need to be determined before next May. If the common currency were to begin in 1999 with sterling as a starting participant, the British people would have to give their approval in a promised referendum at least by the end of 1998, which would allow all of four months' preparation. Clearly those timings are insufficient, practically and politically. German and French banks are already gearing up to convert to euro transactions; British banks, beset by the problem of re-dating software for the millennium, are barely at square one. Meanwhile, it is conceivable that a referendum could be held next year, on the ba-

sis of mere months of debate? Londoners deserve at least the spring to mull over self-government: time for the referendum in May, which ought to mean campaigning on Europe could not begin till the summer. It is not doable, and it is time the Government said so.

In recent weeks there have been signs of Euro-manceuvring by the Cabinet's two great Scottish rivals, Messrs Brown and Cook. Mr Brown glows with Euro-heat; Mr Cook makes the Eurosphiles shiver. That is all well and good: it is about time we saw some of the frozen disagreements in the Labour camp. As for the Prime Minister, he charms colleagues in Amsterdam but his body language at home leaves every option open. Now is the time for ostriches to lever their heads from the sand. The British people might not like it; they might prefer it if this period of Euro-silence lasted for ever. But the single currency will not disappear. Britain will not - cannot - join the nations qualifying on 1 May next.

Having said that out loud, the Government should then open a debate about whether we want to make a commitment to joining a "second wave" early next century. If Gordon Brown is sincere when he says the British economy is on a stable growth path, and so there is no need to "stop" growth abruptly in two or three years, then he is also saying that convergence between the British and continental economies will be occurring as it were, naturally at the century's turn. That points towards British entry in 2002. That would give the country some four-and-a-half years to prepare: time enough for the banks and financial system to get it together, time also for both a single-issue referendum and for the next general election, which together would supply the necessary legitimacy. Alternatively, as others in the Cabinet might argue, just as we no longer have anything to lose by staying out of the first wave, we have nothing to gain by committing ourselves now. Which is it to be, Mr Blair?

Like it or not, Tony still is

LETTERS

Post letters to Letters to the Editor
and include a daytime telephone number.
Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.
Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Vegetarians and CJD

Sir: Science progresses by learning from the unexpected. The report that an unfortunate young woman has contracted new variant CJD though she had been for many years strictly vegetarian, suggests a rethink about the mode of entry of the infecting agent (part of a protein).

A hint lies in a small paragraph in the report which stated that the lady worked in a pet-shop and regularly handled dry pellet dog food. Any new hypothesis should include this new fact. Dry dog food, like the dry supplementary feed which is given to cows to increase the milk yield, is potentially dusty stuff. Animals sniffing through the food in a feeding bowl obviously inhale some.

Could this have been the mode of 'infection' with the prion protein, not only for cows and other domesticated animals, but for human handlers of the food?

At first sight the respiratory tract is not a likely route of entry; apart, that is, from the nose, where the sensory apparatus for smell lies.

This consists of nerve cells whose processes protrude at the surface of the mucous membrane when they pick up smell particles.

These nerve cells derive from and remain in direct contact with the brain. Here is a relatively easy point of entry to the brain by infected dust.

Several features support this idea in humans. Firstly, the unexpectedly short incubation time in cases of the new variant disease. This was found experimentally in many species when direct brain implantation by the agent was made as opposed to giving it in food.

Secondly, the relative youth of the known cases. The sense of smell is not human's strongest. It deteriorates as we age, and the relevant nerve cells in the nose are reduced in numbers by middle age; in many older people they have been lost completely, together with the sense of smell.

Could this be the reason why the elderly have not so far shown the 'new variant' disease? Only fairly young people with good olfactory systems have so far been affected.

Has the restriction of beef



from our diets been an unnecessary result of a faulty hypothesis?

PETER YATES
Emeritus Professor of Neuropathology
Beach House
Silverdale, Lancashire

Low-powered vehicles

Sir: The Royal Commission on Environmental Protection has come out against the use of large-engined cars, but not enough has been said about the advantages of low-powered vehicles.

Most of the things we own are designed for the purpose for which we use them, but cars are designed to cross deserts at high speeds and race round bends on empty roads.

The result is danger, noise and unnecessary pollution as vehicles accelerate competitively, brake at the next ob-

struction then accelerate again, while averaging only the speed of a bicycle on a typical short journey. Collectively this behaviour is irrational, but the individual driver feels under pressure to join in whether he likes it or not.

Low-powered vehicles purring along at safe speeds would be a world away from our present day 'race-bred' machines. Low acceleration and speeds would result in smoother traffic flows with less bunching and no serious road blocking accidents. It would become safe for children to walk to school, and more people would use their bicycles, resulting in a voluntary reduction in the number of cars on the road without the need for more buses.

CLIVE BASHFORD
London E8

Sir: Your transport item,

"Looking At Our Car Addic-

tion", misses the point by focusing on fuel consumption. Even if all our cars became pollution-free tomorrow, we would still be facing imminent gridlock. So, we have to analyse the purpose of these journeys, of people and freight, and see how many can be avoided. Fuel duty is indeed one of the 'sticks' to this end, and our fast-growing IT capability undoubtedly one of the carrots.

After all, few people want to spend hours on a boring motorway going to a meeting, and I have yet to find anyone (outside of Tesco's management) who thinks it makes sense to truck Italian broccoli to Cornwall during the Cornish broccoli season. Yet, at present, that is what they do.

David Gordon

Linminster

Somerset

I have witnessed how a child cycle-training scheme has created an uncontrolled cycling gang. This soon graduates into a motor cycling gang. Because cycling lawlessness normally goes unchecked such cyclists

writes of a "conflict" between cyclists and traffic, but cyclists themselves are part of traffic and are often the most lawless and irresponsible part.

We are losing our pavements to helmeted families and gangs of "macho" cyclists, part of a cycling culture which ignores traffic lights and one-way streets and which increasingly cycles without lights at night.

Cycling, far from being "environmentally friendly", is now a prime destroyer of amenity and countryside. Footpaths are being arrogated by impatient cyclists, while sensitive sites in mountains and elsewhere are being worn down by excessive cycle use.

I have witnessed how a child cycle-training scheme has created an uncontrolled cycling gang. This soon graduates into a motor cycling gang. Because cycling lawlessness normally goes unchecked such cyclists

reach adolescence as ready-made anarchic road-rage motorists.

E BURNBULL
Gosforth
Northumberland

Sir: Public transport? What public transport? Mrs Thatcher put paid to our public transport system.

Dirty, unreliable, difficult to access, inconvenient to use, lacking any sort of integration: who will use buses and trains unless they have to?

MARGARET BRADBURY
Harrowden
Northamptonshire

Sir: The Southall crash

Sir: You report (20 September) on the "grim regularity" of disasters on Britain's railways, with a death toll of some 70 over the last ten years. What do we say about the grim regular-

ity of disasters on Britain's roads, with a death toll of some 7000 last week, and the week before, and the week before that and...? Few of us have pistols in our pockets, but many have lethal weapons on the road. Who cares? I ask the question in all seriousness.

MERVYN EVANS
Oxford

Sir: All the media coverage of the recent rail disaster at Southall seems to have missed one ironic fact. The old and truly Great Western Railway had a successful form of automatic train control operating on its main lines 70 years ago, and almost certainly on this very piece of track. I quote from *The 10.30 Limited - a Book for Boys of All Ages* published by the GWR in 1923:

...In their continued efforts to increase the safety of railway travel, the Great Western Railway has installed at some points

the GWR System of Automatic Train Control combined with Audible Signals. The primary object of this system is to give audible warning to an engine-driver when his train is approaching a distant signal in the *On* position, and, in the event of this warning being disregarded, automatically apply the brakes so as to ensure the train being pulled up before it reaches the home signal.

The system continued to be used on lines in and out of Paddington until well after railway nationalisation.

JOHN EVANS

Bomb won't explode

Sir: Your front page spread on Friday 19 September regarding the "defusing of the Year 2000 computer timebomb" has long been a cause of (needless) concern. Microsoft, in its ultimate quest, will inevitably come up with a last-minute solution: "Windows 2000" - which will circumnavigate the "timebomb".

Millions of corporate organisations and businesses will have no alternative but to update their systems software yet again - at a price.

The solution is surely much simpler: forget the Millennium. At 23.59 (or a little before) on 31 December 1999 we all reset our computer clocks to 2001. Forget Taskforce 2000, forget the megabucks being drained from the Lottery funds for Kubla Khan's Konstructions in Greenwich and cancel the year 2000. Of course, overnight we'll all be a year older, digitally - in less than the time it takes your average systems manager to knock back a glass of Chardonnay - but it won't cost a bean. (Incidentally, I've already tried resetting the clock on my Apple Macintosh Power PC for the year 2000, and it works fine.)

NICHOLAS LUMSDEN
London E9

Negative thought

Sir: For me, the one plus feature of the new *Independent* is the almost total disappearance of the minus signs from the changes column of the share prices.

HAROLD G STONE
Wareham,
Dorset

have been carefully saving for them.

Whoever it was said that you can't judge a book by its cover was not a graphic artist.

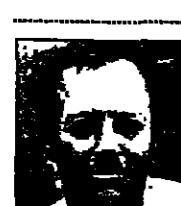
Being English is a duty, being Welsh is a struggle, being Scottish is hard work but being Irish is a full-time performance.

A painter is luckier than a sculptor. He only has to depict his subject from in front.

What does a blind pianist call the black and white keys?

Would you like to know more about the wonderful world of "Albanian Wit and Wisdom"? Just send me a blank cheque - and don't forget to sign it.

Famous Albanian proverbs – or the triumph of madness over meaning



MILES
KINGTON

Today I bring you more thoughts and sayings from the 'Great Book of Albanian Wit and Wisdom'. What is Albanian wit and wisdom? Well, whereas an English proverb is brisk and sensible, an Albanian proverb is one which doesn't quite yield up its message at first glance. Nor at second or third glance, neither...

Tea is the only meal named after a drink.

What is the difference between sticking a stamp upside down on a letter, and sticking a letter upside down on a stamp?

You can share a bed with someone but you cannot dream the same dreams.

No man is an island. However, some men are rocky peninsulas who are regularly cut

off from the mainland twice a day, during breakfast time and at cocktail hour.

To keep the dust out of her hair, a cleaning woman need only put on a knotted handkerchief. To achieve the same object, a chef has to put on a white hat a foot high.

Nobody ever smiles in a self-portrait.

The swallow is said to be able to sleep while flying. But that's nothing compared with human capabilities. In the act of flying, *Homo sapiens* can also eat, drink, buy duty-free objects and then go to sleep during a movie with earphones on, simultaneously snoring with his mouth wide open.

A chef is not an artist, but a performer. His

tragedy is that he is forced to work in a place where there is no audience.

Which came first, skipping or the skipping rope?

Next time your account is well in credit, write to your bank and tell them their borrowing is at an unacceptable high level.

The one person we can never recognise from behind is ourselves.

Cookery programmes on television are not devised to bring cookery to the audience, but to bring an audience to the cook.

A dog which refuses to fetch a stick is not

necessarily stupid or disobedient. He may be a very intelligent dog which has learnt that if he does fetch the stick, it will only be thrown back to the same place again.

Nobody knows where the wind comes from, says the poet. But only a poet would want to know.

The reason the car replaced the horse was not that it went further or faster, but that you could buy it on hire purchase.

Rugby players often resort to fistcuffs, but a boxing match never degenerates into a scrum or line-out.

Posterity is the name we give to the people who tear down and blow up the things we

have built.

ANDREW WHITTEM
SMITH

OXFORD

Like it or not, Paddy and Tony still need each other



DONALD
MACINTYRE
WITH THE
LIB DEMS IN
EASTBOURNE

When Paddy Ashdown was a young officer in the Special Boat Squadron one of his many challenging jobs was to drive – literally – torpedoes underwater towards their targets. It's not a bad metaphor for what he's trying to do now: something difficult, dangerous and below the surface.

Slowly, cautiously, the Liberal Democrat leader is trying to condition his hesitant, wary, party to the possibilities, and the realities, of the new political order. Large sections of Liberal Democrat mankind cannot bear very much reality, so much of his big conference speech tomorrow will no doubt be delicately coded. But the warning he will issue, that there are no risk-free options for the party, is part of a long, tortuous, and increasingly urgent educational process. It's time to get real.

When the party was on its knees after the Alliance imploded in the wake of the 1987 election, it was unimaginable that Lib Dems could win 46 seats, have secured proportional representation for the European Parliament, be looking forward to coalition partnership in the governance of Scotland and be sitting on a cabinet committee under the chairmanship of a Labour prime minister. Today, the great goal of electoral reform for Westminster, and a quantum leap in the party's size and power, is at least in sight, if not yet within grasp. Ashdown's message will surely be that the party now needs fresh clarity about what it is and isn't possible.

Tony Blair, it must be emphasised, regards the question of which electoral system Britain uses as essentially of secondary importance. That's hard for some steeped in a Liberal tradition which elevates proportional representation almost to an end in itself. But Blair seems to have been emphatically clear about what he wants at the Downing Street dinner he had with Paddy Ashdown, Roy Jenkins and Peter Mandelson on June 12. He seeks nothing less than the reunification of the centre left, whose split into Liberals and Labour made the century a largely Conservative one.

This is revisionism on a breath-taking scale: it says, in effect, that the Labour Party was an aberration and ought not to have happened. But Tony Blair may yet decide that his grand plan does not require PR.

There are still ministerial hawks who insist that Blair can afford to resist electoral change for Westminster on the grounds that top Liberal Democrats will, in any case, have nowhere to go but to Labour. I think they are

wrong. The momentum propelling the Prime Minister towards electoral change is too great. But the stance taken by these hawks is a reminder of how tough the negotiations on the cabinet committee will be. It also demonstrates how far purists among the Liberal Democrats will have to compromise if the talks are to succeed.

The first big step is the electoral commission which will shortly assemble to decide what new electoral system should be put to a referendum. It is increasingly possible that Blair will offer Lord Jenkins the job of chairing that commission: the affectionate respect he has for Jenkins is, if anything, deepening over time. And this would be a significant gesture to the Lib Dems; it would suggest that Blair was at least persuadable in favour of Commons PR. Jenkins himself would certainly ensure that the commission proposed a genuinely proportional system to put to the referendum. But what kind?

Peter Mandelson advocates the alternative vote, under which electors state their first, second and third preferences; this gives electors much more of a real choice; it's good for Labour, it's good for the Liberal Democrats – it would have doubled their seats in 1997. But there's just one problem: it isn't proportional in the sense that the outcome in seats bears no more relation to the national percentage votes than first past the post.

The possible, cloudy, basis for compromise is this: the Commission could recommend an alternative vote system, topped up by additional MPs drawn from party lists to increase the proportionality. The alternative vote could be enacted for the next election, and the rest left till the next parliament and a wholesale redrawing of constituency boundaries.

Enough of the voting system nerdery. The significance of this possible change is that it would require movements from Blair as well as the Liberal Democrats. It is conventional wisdom to assume that the Prime Minister holds all the cards and the Lib Dems are utterly dependent on his pluralistic munificence to make any progress. But ministers should be careful about patronising the Lib Dems.

Blair was right to invite them into the committee. As ministers are already finding senior Liberal Democrats, who know constitutional issues inside out, are proving rather helpful in filling the gaps in Labour's knowledge. It was also in Blair's long-term interests to invite them in. It's easy to forget, given Blair's current enormous popularity and his huge majority, that he won with only 44 per cent of the vote. Only co-operation with the Liberal Democrats offers him the chance of heading a government which commands the support of a true majority of the electorate.

And what goes for the Labour Party, goes for the country too. On Sunday night Shirley Williams made a little speech which reminded you what an aching, irreplaceable loss to the Labour Party was her departure in 1981. There was just a passing reference to the "ruthless" treatment of Labour dissidents during the referendum campaign. But it made the point: imagine for a moment a political landscape without the Liberal Democrats, a world without any body but the Tories to keep Labour's authoritarian tendencies in check. Ask not only what Labour can do for the Liberal Democrats. Ask also what they can do for the Labour Party.

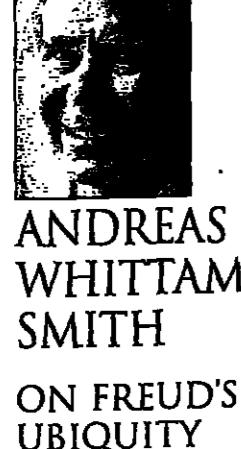
As if to mark the enduring influence of Freud, a life-size bronze statue of the great man was moved last week from a neglected spot at the back of a north London public library to a more suitable resting place a few hundred yards up the road.

Jonathan Miller, an expert in neuro-psychology as well as a theatre and opera director, gave a short speech at the unveiling and many members of the Freud clan were present. Perhaps they defiantly rescued the statue because they have been taken aback by the spate of books published recently attacking their distinguished ancestor in very vicious terms. Yet WH Auden's poem, written in memory of Freud on his death in exile in London in 1939, still perfectly describes his significance:

"If often he was wrong
and, at times absurd,
to us he is no more a
person now but a whole
climate of opinion
under which we conduct
our different lives:
Like weather he can
only hinder or help."

As for a whole climate of opinion, I logged the references to Freud in this week's *Independent on Sunday*. There were a surprising number, explicit and implicit, starting with a review of the latest biography. New accounts of his life seem to be published every two or three years as a few extra letters come to light or more work is done, reconstructing the lives of Freud's own patients. There

His reputation may be shrinking but his influence grows



ANDREAS
WHITTAM
SMITH
ON FREUD'S
UBIQUITY

was also an article on shrinks which in its first line quoted Freud as asserting that humour is often a mask for disturbing truths. And then in Joan Smith's column, where she continued her acute analysis of the reaction to Princess Diana's death, she used the same Freudian insight when she argued that it is because the reporting has been so one-sided that a rash of gruesome jokes has already begun to do the rounds, an uncomfortable reminder, she wrote, of the way in which "humour, sometimes of the most macabre sort, functions as an outlet for suppressed feelings". This is pure Freud, as is the notion that the millions of people who were moved by Diana's death, had seen their own conflicts and anxieties in the life of the Princess, so that public mourning was a sort of release.

I cannot claim that Matthew Sweet's review of this week's main film, Mike Leigh's *Carrie Girls*, which I managed to catch on Saturday afternoon, is written in Freudian terms. But in the film itself, one of the scenes has the two "career girls" attending lectures on Freud in their student days during the 1980s, and the action turns on the fact that the fathers of both women deserted their mothers when they were eight years old, leaving one of them with no memory of her childhood before that event. We thus immediately enter the territory of infants' relationships with their parents in which

A cross they must continue to bear – whatever the critics say

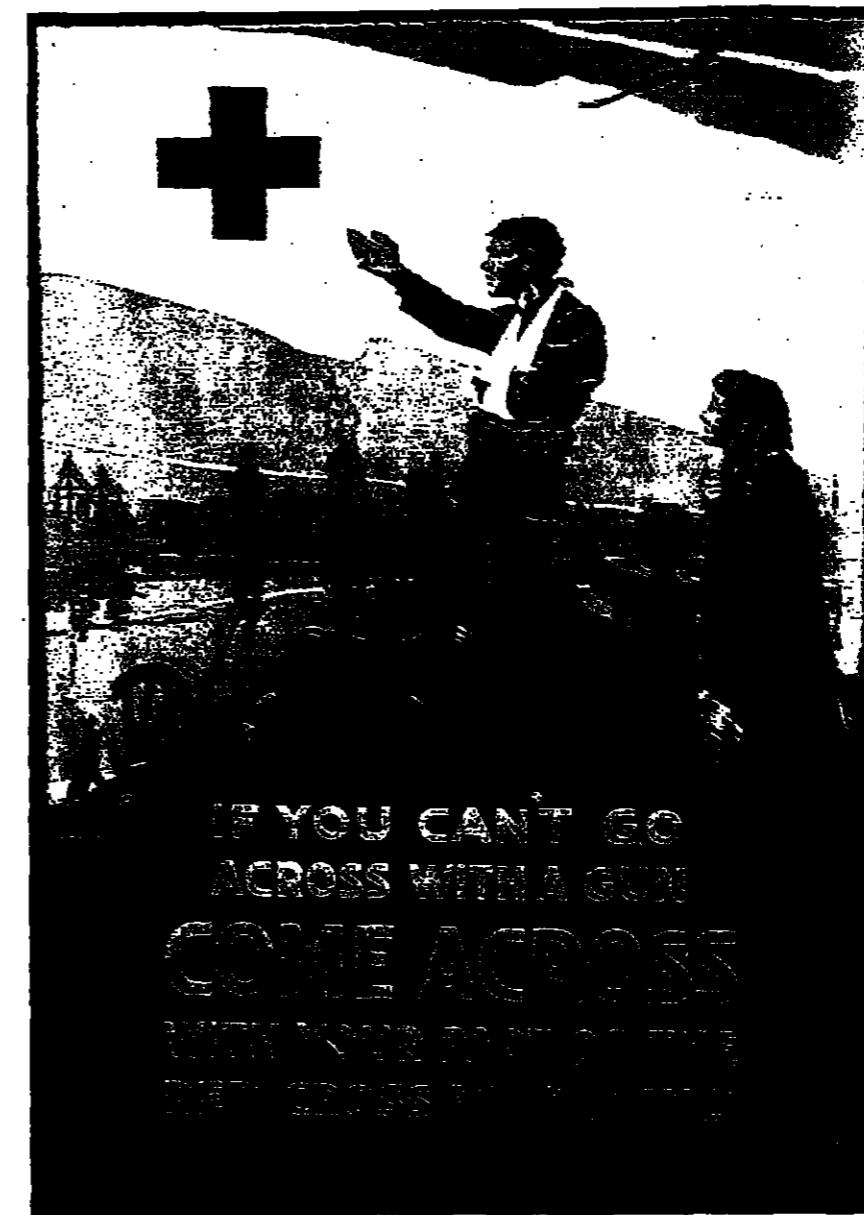


RUPERT
CORNWELL
ON THE
FATE OF THE
RED CROSS

What is the Red Cross up to? To quote the reaction of one practitioner of the hard-nosed business of advertising yesterday, it is a "simply ludicrous idea" for the organisation whose name and emblem conjures up mankind's nobler side, to consider a change in a logo that would be worth billions were it a car marque, a type of biscuit or brand of cigarettes.

Yet that is what is happening. In terms of instant recognition, the red cross may have been overtaken in these consumer-driven times by the likes of the golden arches of McDonalds, the Mercedes star, and the yellow shell of a certain international oil company. But among the logos of international bodies, only the five rings of the Olympic movement is better known. And in terms of status, prestige, not to mention basic standards of human conduct, the IOC cannot be mentioned in the same breath as the organisation founded in 1863 by a Swiss businessman called Jean Henri Dunant.

In November however, representatives of the Red Cross, its affiliate bodies and the 188 signatory countries of the Geneva Convention whose history is entwined with its own, will gather in Seville. There they will consider whether in certain circumstances to replace the cross and its sister emblem the crescent with another symbol. The modification would be limited. The British Red Cross and other national organisations would continue to use the cross in their own countries, for fundraising and other purposes. In the war zones, however, Red Cross personnel, ambulances and field hospitals would carry a different insignia. Among the currently favoured choices are a red diamond, lozenge, or hexagon on a white background. Not only would a



134-year sub-chapter of the history of warfare end. There could be few more revealing commentaries on our times.

It was in 1859 when Dunant tended the wounded at the battle of Solferino and was appalled by the horrors Italians and Hapsburg Austrians inflicted upon each other. He decided to create a voluntary, neutral and exclusively humanitarian body to alleviate the most dreadful sufferings of war. Thus, four years later, in the country whose very name is synonymous with neutrality, was born the Red Cross. The initial batch of signatories numbered a dozen – among them Britain which seven years later set up a national organisation that today is active in almost 50 countries, with annual charity income of £90m and some 90,000 volunteer workers.

In those earliest days, religion had nothing to do with it.

The "Red Cross" was merely the Swiss national flag with its

colours reversed. But the formulation was too simple to last. In the Islamic world, a cross evoked not divine mercy but the sectarian imperialism of the Crusades, and by 1876 and the Russo-Turkish war, the Red Cross was operating in Muslim lands as the Red Crescent. A 19th-century version of political correctness? Perhaps. Unquestionably, however, in the long run, the mistake would prove fatal as it was well-intentioned. Henceforth the religious association was irreversible. At first it scarcely mattered. But now the Red Cross itself has paid a gradually increasing price, to the point where a change of name is a serious, perhaps the only, option.

Elizabeth Twinch was one of the fortunate ones. A Red Cross official taken hostage in Tajikistan early this year, she managed to talk her guerrilla captors into releasing her, warning of the damage that would be done to their move-

ment's name if they persisted. But a year earlier, three Swiss Red Cross workers had been killed in Burundi, while in December 1996, six Red Cross workers, five of them women, were shot to death in their beds as they slept in a Red Cross hospital building in the Chechen capital of Grozny. Why were they killed? Perhaps it was Russians seeking to show that Chechen insurgents were simply beyond the pale of human decency, maybe indeed it was muslim Chechens believing the Red Cross was the creature of an imperialist, unholly Russia.

Plainly, though, these are treacherous and increasingly familiar waters. But for all its primitiveness and brutality, Chechnya is a thoroughly modern war – not so much between states as within a state, coloured if not directly caused by reli-

gious differences. Gone are the clear-cut 19th-century conflicts between nation states and empires of Dunant's day, replaced by growing evidence that irrefutably religious symbols like cross and crescent add to the hazards of the battlefield.

And there are further complications. Israel, for one, recognises neither the cross nor the crescent, and has its own humanitarian organisation, the Magen David Adom, with its own symbol, the Star of David – which, of course, no one else recognises. If anything indeed, the tendency is for images to proliferate: the Shah of Iran used a red lion and rising sun, before the Islamic regime of Ayatollah Khomeini reverted to the Red Crescent. In India, it is said, Red Buddhas have been observed on fields of conflict. But each new symbol only subtracts from the universal value of the Red Cross/Crescent and adds to the planet's already excessive stock of cultural rivalry and division.

And so the adman's axioms may be ignored. As Red Cross officials themselves acknowledge, even a change limited to the war zone would cost a fortune. They would have to drum in, around the world and quite probably in the fiercest heat of combat, a reflex understanding among tank commanders, artillerymen and snipers alike, that sanctuary and mercy are represented not by a cross or a crescent, but by a red diamond, lozenge or some other logo more resembling an international road traffic sign. Almost certainly, of course, governments would help who would risk international opprobrium by spurning so noble a cause?

Inevitably, and rightly, the resistance to change will be massive. As Mike Whitlam, director general of the British Red Cross, put it, "Why do this when we've got the best logo in the world?" He may take comfort that any change is not for tomorrow. The working documents now circulating are but the latest instalment of a debate which first surfaced in the 1970s. A new emblem can only arrive when ratified by all 188 signatories to the Geneva Convention. And if it does, we should blame not the Red Cross. After all, it was not the Red Cross which turned religion into the touchpaper of modern warfare, but ourselves.

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The Face enjoys enormous respect within the worlds of fashion and publishing, and is

one of the few magazines that can claim to be globally influential. The *New York Times* recently called it "the primary chronicle of youth culture", while Giorgio Armani calls it a "touchstone".

Vanity Fair

With a unique mix of glamour and grit, *Vanity Fair* opens doors to Hollywood, high finance, politics and culture, tracking the latest scandals, while Giorgio Armani calls it a "good book, a feast for the eyes and the mind. Consistently hitting the headlines with ground-

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2 FREE MAGAZINES

Tatler

The October issue of *Tatler* attaches up with Christie Brinkley, the cover girl's cover girl, and goes inside her Hamptons home. The magazine tracks own the Hollywood Britpack, while Henry Dent-Brocklehurst and fiancée Lili Maltese dress up in butter-soft, sharp, sexy and sleek leather. Plus, is your sofa more a hit-list than an It-list - *Tatler* assesses the British designers who will help your house look hip, and tribute to Sir James Goldsmith, dynamic tycoon, dynamic family man and would-be acesman, through the eyes of his daughter Isabel. October's issue comes with the 1998 *Tatler* the Park Restaurant Guide - an indispensable round up of the hottest tables in town (and w to secure them).

iQ

October sees the 100th issue of *iQ*, which celebrates in style with Paul Whitehouse. David Bowie dons Paul Smith. Reverend Dog Michael Marsden examines how Hollywood's leading und is creating a new breed trouble, and Tyne Banks as back to basics. Plus, Paul Weller's motor-racing pas-

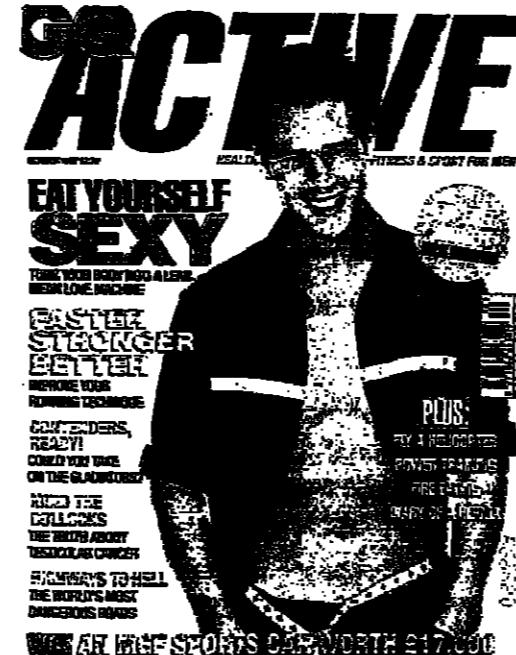
sion, the City addicts chasing the dragon and promotion, and the best blather from the last 100 issues of *GQ*.

The Face

The team behind *Trainspotting* are back with a fine romance. *The Face* goes on the set of *A Life Less Ordinary* in Utah, and has a heart-to-heart with the film's stars, Ewan McGregor and Cameron Diaz. Plus: Embrace, the rising British rock band; Hiromi, the 20-year-old Japanese schoolgirl whose titillating pics of her friends are causing a revolution; Lil' Kim: board art; John Leguizamo: Photo; drag kings; and an exclusive interview with the Dalai Lama. Sort of...

GQ Active

The health, fitness and sport for men, brings the reader the ultimate eat yourself sexy plan. David Coulthard reveals his hi-tech work-out which is as advanced as the McLaren he drives. Plus, ways you can improve your running technique, the *GQ Active* trainer top ten, and how to take on The Gladiators. The October issue of *GQ Active* comes with a special edition 256 page guide to Daring Days Out in the UK.



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BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR, JEREMY WARNER
NEWS DESK: 0171-293 2636 FAX: 0171-293 2098 E-MAIL: INDYBUSINESS@INDEPENDENT.CO.UK
FINANCIAL JOURNAL OF THE YEAR

Like it or lump it, Brussels tells BA alliance

Karel Van Miert, the European Competition Commissioner, yesterday said US regulators backed his demands that British Airways and American Airlines surrender 350 slots a week at Heathrow. He was speaking ahead of a meeting today with Margaret Beckett to discuss the P&O/Stena ferry merger. *Michael Harrison reports.*

Mr Van Miert insisted there would be no horse-trading with BA and AA, indicating that Brussels had already softened its stance on the concessions being demanded. He said that if it had applied the same rules to their alliance as other tie-ups between US and European carriers then the two carriers would have had to give up 500 slots.

The Competition Commissioner also said it was his understanding that the US Department of Transportation, the main regulatory body on the other side of the Atlantic, was looking for a similar level of slot concessions.

Mr Van Miert said he was not saying "to BA and AA 'take it or leave it'" but that the Commission stood by its demands. "We have no reason to back track from that. As things stand the companies will have to come up with proposals."

BA and AA would not be allowed to sell the slots because the legislation did not allow for that and they would have to surrender them from the first day their alliance became operational.

Mr Van Miert's tough stance helps explain why there are real worries in some quarters that the alliance will never get off the ground. Bob Crandall, the chairman of American Airlines, last week gave a downbeat assessment of the prospects of gaining approval from Brussels. But he



Karel Van Miert criticised open skies agreements, saying they "flew in the face of the principles of the single market"

said the two airlines still planned to co-operate even if they were not allowed to proceed with a full-blown merger of their transatlantic operations.

The concessions that Brussels is demanding are the equivalent to 25 round trips from Heathrow a day. The Office of Fair Trading has recommended the two airlines give up half that number of flights but rival US carriers have argued that the concessions should be double the level demanded by Brussels.

Bob Ayling, BA's chief executive, spoke briefly to Mr Van Miert yesterday at an SBC Warburg transport conference the two men were attending in London and shook hands.

Later BA put out a conciliatory statement which contrasted with its initial criticisms of the Commission's "flawed" approach to vetting the alliance when it submitted its formal response on 5 September.

BA said it had met the Commission last Friday and agreed that a detailed series of meetings would take place over the

next few months to discuss issues raised by the Commission's competition directorate and respond to its request for substantial further information.

"We are confident that at the end of this process an equitable solution will be reached with the three competition authorities of the UK, US and EC."

Earlier Mr Van Miert had indicated that unless progress was made then the Commission would move to formalise its position. He said Brussels could not prevent the alliance from

proceeding but if it went ahead on the proposed basis "there will be trouble for sure".

Separately, he criticised the open skies agreements that a number of EU member states have been signing with the US and which London and Washington will sign if the BA-AA alliance goes ahead.

These, he said "flew in the face of the principles of the single market" because they discriminated in favour of certain airlines. The Commission has filed a complaint with the Eu-

ropean Court of Justice but has agreed to freeze the action pending talks with member states about Brussels being given the power to negotiate Europe-wide agreements with the US.

Whitehall sources described the meeting between Mrs Beckett and Mr Van Miert as significant, indicating that London and Brussels are close to a decision on the deal. The Commission wants to impose concessions to protect ferry passengers.

Outlook, page 25

Key shareholders join calls to remove Bradshaw at Care First

Shareholder calls to oust Keith Bradshaw, the chairman of Care First, following a boardroom bust-up gathered pace yesterday. Meanwhile other directors in the nursing home group are coming under pressure as more employees consider leaving.

The question now is whether Chai Patel, the group's former chief executive, will be reinstated, writes Sameena Ahmad.

Two key shareholders in Care First, the embattled nursing home group, yesterday joined calls to remove Keith Bradshaw as chairman. Following meetings yesterday with Chai Patel, who quit as chief executive last month after a power struggle with Mr Bradshaw, Mercury Asset Management and Schroders, which hold around 9 per cent of the group's shares, have shifted their positions in favour of removing Mr Bradshaw. Schroders is also keen to reinstate Mr Patel while MAM is undecided.

Invesco and Abbey Life said yesterday that they had support from at least 20 per cent of shareholders to call an emergency meeting and are preparing to present shareholders' concerns to SBC Warburg, Care First's advisers, tomorrow. The institutions want to vote on two issues - whether to remove Mr Bradshaw and whether to reinstate Mr Patel.

A leading fund manager who called recent developments a "shareholder democracy in action," said yesterday that he saw no reason why Mr Patel should not come back: "He is the best brains in the sector and he is willing to return. I cannot see why the board say it would be difficult to get him back."

A split is also emerging among Care First's non-executive directors. Some members of the company's board are unhappy about the claim by Warburgs that more than half of shareholders support Mr Bradshaw staying as non-executive chairman. One non-executive yesterday independently called leading shareholders to clarify their views.

The position of Keith Ackroyd, Care First's deputy chairman, and Ron Reid, finance director, also look increasingly uncertain.

Mr Ackroyd yesterday faced criticism

from institutions for being too close to Mr Bradshaw. He and Ian Kirkpatrick, another non-executive director, have been accused of undermining Mr Patel's reputation to shareholders. One said that he was "disillusioned" that some of the non-executive directors at Care First appeared to be closing ranks. Care First was unavailable for comment last night.

Mr Ackroyd has also been accused by some observers of failing as the senior non-executive director to make every effort to inform all other non-executives of Mr Patel's intentions to resign. One non-executive who was not contacted by Mr Ackroyd before the resignation said he would have tried to persuade Mr Patel to solve the issue from within the group. "It could have all looked very different."

Though the director eventually voted against Mr Patel's reinstatement "for the sake of board unity", he said yesterday that, "in an ideal world, Mr Patel is still the best person to run this company".

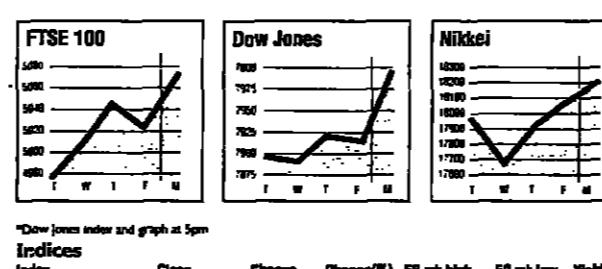
Mr Reid is also facing criticism over accounting policy within the company following the merger last year between Takare, founded by Mr Bradshaw, and Court Cavendish, Mr Patel's company.

The company's failure to implement a proper accounting and payroll system means Care First is still owed several hundreds of thousands of pounds by employees who were overpaid. The company was forced to call in its auditors KPMG at the half-year to overhaul the accounts.

Monale is said to be low among senior employees at Care First. Since news last week that four management board members were considering leaving the company, several top managers have contacted *The Independent*, saying they are also reviewing their positions.

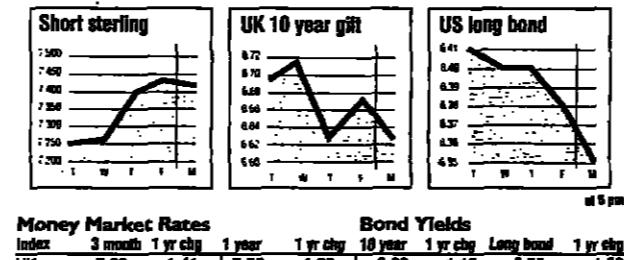
Meanwhile Butterfield Securities will today join Laing & Buisson, the healthcare consultants in questioning Care First's stock market value. In a new research note, Butterfield places a maximum value on Care First's assets of 65p-70p a share, significantly below Warburg's estimate of 170p and the group's share price of 97p. "Once institutions realise what this company is worth, they will see that no-one is going to bid even a pound for it," said Laing & Buisson's Paul Saper. "Care First needs a leader who can radically improve relations with the health authorities and bring in skilled managers. The old Takare management know it which is why they merged with Court Cavendish in the first place."

STOCK MARKETS



Indices						
Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5075.70	51.90	1.03	5066.80	3900.40	3.46
FTSE 250	4707.20	6.00	0.13	4729.40	4348.10	3.48
FTSE All Share	2381.51	19.20	0.81	2376.39	1925.79	3.45
FTSE SmallCap	2296.8	3.10	0.14	2374.20	2128.40	3.33
FTSE Pledging	1272.6	1.00	0.08	1346.50	1198.70	3.29
FTSE 100	1016.1	-2.20	-0.22	1138.00	1002.10	0.96
Dow Jones	7999.04	81.04	1.02	8259.31	5868.85	1.65
Nikkei	18201.32	143.11	0.79	21612.30	17303.65	0.84
Hang Seng	14108.08	-276.05	-1.92	18873.27	11546.70	2.96
Dax	4088.92	56.95	1.39	4438.93	2627.04	1.95

INTEREST RATES



Money Market Rates						
Index	3 month	1 yr chg	1 year	1 yr chg	1 yr chg	1 yr chg
UK	7.29	1.41	7.52	1.33	6.82	-1.15
US	5.72	0.09	5.97	-0.19	5.08	-0.76
Japan	0.56	0.07	0.64	-0.08	2.16	-0.76
Germany	3.31	0.21	3.77	0.48	5.54	-0.61

BOND YIELDS

Index	3 month	1 yr chg	10 year	1 yr chg	10 year	1 yr chg
UK	7.29	1.41	7.52	1.33	6.82	-1.15
US	5.72	0.09	5.97	-0.19	5.08	-0.76
Japan	0.56	0.07	0.64	-0.08	2.16	-0.76
Germany	3.31	0.21	3.77	0.48	5.54	-0.61

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chg	Falls	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chg
Eng Chira Clays	263.50	30.50	13.09	Thorn PLC	151.50	-14.50	-8.73
Layton PLC	706.50	30.00	4.43	Telewest Comm	78.00	-2.50	-3.11
Nad Grid Group	274.00	10.00	3.79	Hambros PLC	219.00	-8.00	-3.57
BICC PLC	151.00	5.50	3.79	Ocean Group PLC	581.50	-12.50	-2.10

CURRENCIES

	1st 5 mn	Chg	Yr Ago		1st 5 mn	Chg	Yr Ago	
Dollar	1.6017	-0.056	1.5562	Sterling	0.8243	+0.34p	0.6426	
D-Mark	2.0744	+1.99p	2.3540	D-Mark	1.7947	+2.18p	1.5122	
Yen	195.34	-1.29	171.14	Yen	121.98	+0.74	109.88	
£ Index	100.20	-0.40	88.10	£ Index	105.70	+0.00	97.10	

source: Bloomberg

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Tinpot speculator meets tinpot dictator

Tinpot speculator meets tinpot dictator. George Soros and Mahathir Mohamad were involved in a spectacular exchange of insults at the IMF meeting in Hong Kong over the weekend. They perhaps thoroughly deserve each other. But there's equally little doubt about who is in the right on all this. Like him or loathe him, it is George Soros.

There's nothing particularly new in the Malaysian premier's complaint. From George Brown's famous fingering of the "G-nomes of Zurich", politicians the world over tended to blame their economic ills, given the chance, on the antics of international speculators.

In recent years, however, the speculator has come to be seen in a rather more favourable light, even a force for good if the end result of his activities is what turns out to be a necessary economic adjustment.

That is what has occurred in the Far East. The IMF has been warning for several years that the Pacific Rim economies were floating on a dangerous mixture of unchecked credit expansion and speculative froth.

The only real puzzle is that it has taken the likes of George Soros so long to move in on the region and exploit it. What he and other speculators have done is certainly accelerating the pace of crisis, and possibly by over-correcting in the way markets always do, deepened it a bit. But there is little doubt that the punishment capital markets are inflicting on the region is thoroughly deserved.

By attempting to fight it, Mahathir and others are just exacerbating the situation. The region's growth has been fed by foreign capital. Now to turn round and try and impose capital controls in an attempt to stop what the speculators are doing is merely going to make a bad position worse. If a country is in need of foreign capital, about the worst thing it can possibly do is attempt to prevent it getting out. Mahathir and others in the regional are living in the financial equivalent of psychological denial. It's always so much easier to blame the nasty foreign speculator than acknowledge your own failings.

Mr Mahathir's strictures are naturally very much directed at his own domestic audience, but when phrased in such in-temperate and backward-looking language, he shouldn't be surprised if he is taken seriously by the financial markets as well. Mr Soros is right. Mahathir is a menace to his own country. He is making a bad situation worse and by doing so he is performing a grave disservice to his own people. If the international capital markets help hasten his demise, that would be an added bonus.

If it is true that National Westminster Bank has put Gleacher, its US corporate finance business, up for sale, then plainly things are in a rather more serious state round there than anyone imagined. Or are they?

NatWest was downplaying the reports yesterday, but that Gleacher is up for sale is certainly what many of its rivals think.

It is little more than eighteen months ago that NatWest bought Gleacher. More dramatic U turns in corporate strategy than this have certainly been known, but they generally don't take place under the same management.

Investment banking was to have been a cornerstone of the NatWest Group. To further these ambitions, the company bought in short order Gleacher, Garntmore, Greenwich Capital Markets and Ham- bro Magan.

Even before NatWest discovered a blackhole in its options book, none of these acquisitions looked particularly inspired. The partners of Hambro Magan, once a booming corporate finance boutique, seem to have been out to pasture, or possibly lunch, ever since NatWest picked them up. NatWest might be well advised to get them off the pay role too.

Martin Owen, chief executive of NatWest Markets, has done the honourable thing and hymn book in hand, fallen on his sword.

But he was hardly the only or even the chief architect of all this. That the chairman and chief executive of NatWest can so brazenly reverse a strategy they embarked on such a short time ago almost beggars belief.

Unless, of course, you believe what the share price is saying - that the bank is being groomed for takeover.

Three possible suitors are known to have given NatWest the once over already - Abbey National, the Prudential, and Bar- clays.

To that list can now be added the Hal- ifax, which is said to have a not insub- stantial team evaluating the possibility of a merger. Plainly, investment banking of no interest at all to Halifax.

It may involve some swallowing of pride, but if what Lord Alexander and Derek Wanless are doing is attempting to make themselves more appealing to others, then shareholders might have something to thank them for after all. In attempting to improve its return from investment banking, NatWest is probably on a hiding to nothing. The more direct route to shareholder value may be for NatWest to get out of this business entirely.

Karel Van Miert is not exactly flavour of the month at British Airways. Nor has he endeared himself to Lord Sterling's ferry company P&O. In fact, given the frequency with which he journeys from Brussels to London these days, his travel options are beginning to look decidedly narrow.

The European Competition Commissi- oner is in town today to talk to Margaret Beckett about the P&O-Stena ferry merger.

Yesterday he was giving the BA-American Airlines alliance more stick. In case the accountancy profession thought it had got away with it, he is about to get his teeth stuck into the Coopers & Lybrand-Price Waterhouse merger.

What, you may ask, is going on? How, you may wonder, can one man wield such unfettered power? Why, you may con-

clude, can't Brussels keep its big nose out of matters that don't concern it and leave the markets to make sure the consumer is properly served?

Well, in these days of international capital, multi-national corporations and global alliances, Mr Van Miert is the regulatory equivalent.

A one-man competition authority who can side-step the physical boundaries of nation states and take on the cartels wherever they seek to set up.

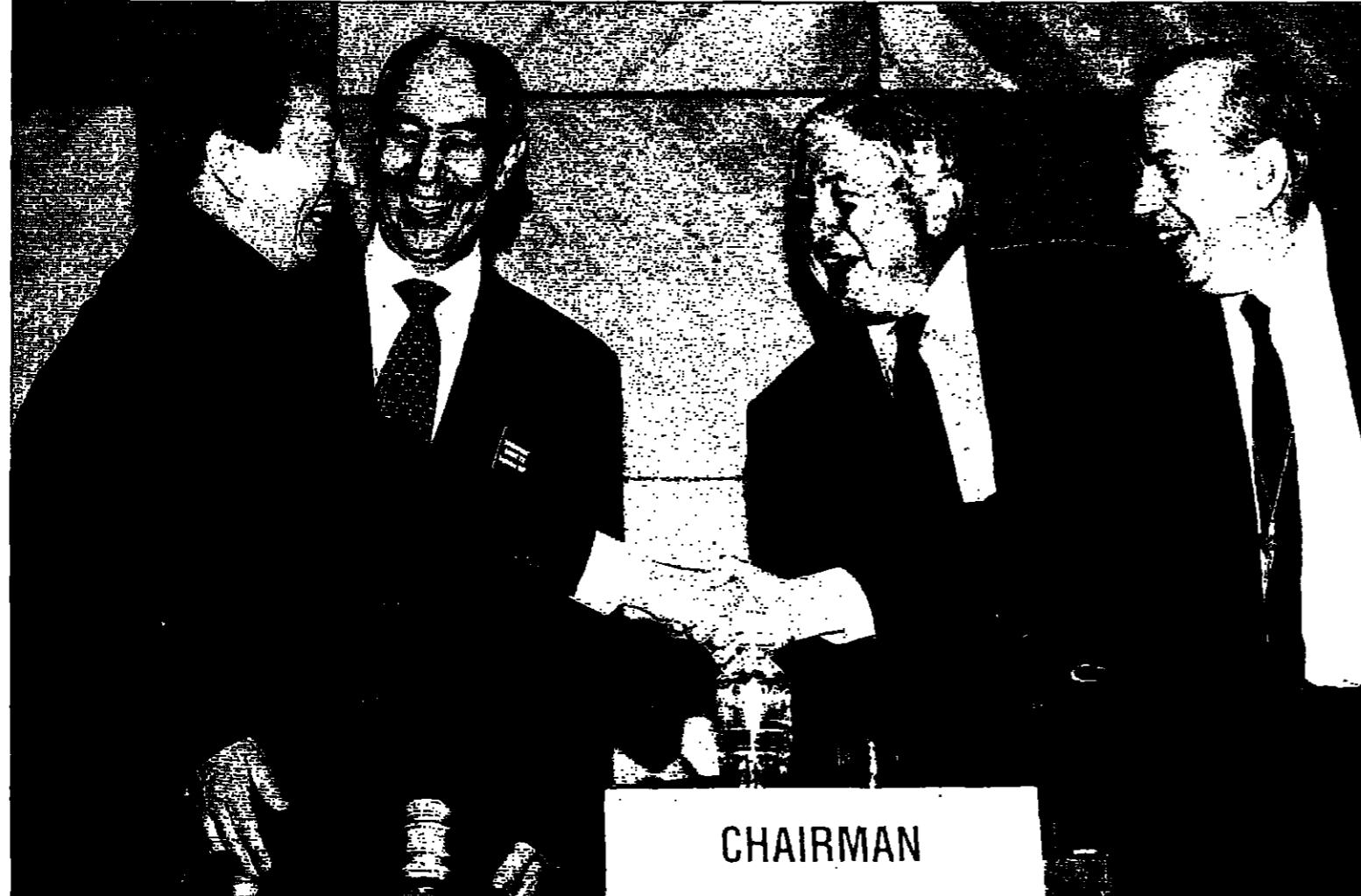
Sometimes he oversteps the mark. It remains a mystery why Brussels ever thought it had the right to veto a merger between two American planemakers. As it transpired, the concessions it wrung out of Boeing were largely academic.

Sometimes Brussels needs to pay more attention to the principle of subsidiarity - the idea that competition law is best made and implemented at local level.

Both the BA-AA and the P&O-Stena mergers raise issues concerning distinct markets but in the case of aviation at least, the ramifications of the merger proposed by BA and AA go far beyond these shores.

But Mr Van Miert and the Commission's competition directorate DG4 are not going to go away, nor can they be ignored. Indeed, if anything, their writ will run wider as more mergers fall into Brussels' lap for approval.

Little Englanders may abhor it. Big business may fight it. But global corpora- tions have to learn that global regulation comes with the territory.



Chinese Vice-Premier Zhu Rongji being welcomed by the top brass at the World Bank/IMF meeting in Hong Kong yesterday

Japan backs Asian rival to IMF

Japan has alarmed other members of the G7 with a detailed plan for an Asian rival to the IMF. The creation of a \$100bn (£63bn) 'Asian Monetary Fund' could place a question mark over the future of the G7 itself.

Diane Coyle,
Economics Editor,
reports.

An unexpected Japanese proposal for the creation of an Asian Monetary Fund, presented to the G7 ministers for the first time in Hong Kong, has angered the Americans and alarmed other countries who fear it would undermine the role of the IMF.

The Japanese plan has emerged from its experience of participating in the \$17.2bn IMF-led rescue package for Thailand this summer.

The Japanese have indicated that they are concerned about being asked to play a bigger role in the world economy without any increase in their influence in the international organisations.

The planned fund, of which the other G7 countries only got wind a week or so before the start of the current IMF annual meeting, would stand ready to bail out any Asian economy suffering a financial crisis like that afflicting Thailand.

The fund would in theory attach the same tough conditions in terms of policy reforms as the IMF does now.

However, officials from

other countries are concerned that a purely regional fund would be more vulnerable to political influence than the IMF.

Many also expressed the fear that the creation of such a big fund earmarked for rescue operations would encourage too much risky lending for Japan's taxpayers would ultimately be providing a guarantee for loans that went badly wrong.

However, there was sympathy, outside the American delegation, for the view that Japan had a genuine grievance about its lack of influence on the international economic stage despite being an important contributor to the IMF's finances. Japan's move touches on the sensitive issue of whether the G7 - with only one

Asian member and no Latin American representation - will continue to be the best forum for international policy discussions as other economies grow much larger.

Other Asian countries - Singapore, Korea, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Thailand - also recently became contributors to the IMF's New Arrangements to Borrow, the emergency over-draft fund set up in the wake of the Mexican crisis in early 1995. They too have been rewarded with little extra influence in the US-dominated IMF.

In addition, some present at the meetings in Hong Kong felt the Americans were most upset by the political implications of being excluded from future Asian packages. Many also agreed that greater co-operation between Asia's central

banks and finance ministries would help prevent a repeat of the recent currency and stock-market crisis - and might have been more effective than the secret IMF mission to Thailand in urging policy reforms.

In the end, if the Asian countries want to go ahead and set up a parallel fund, there is nothing the rest of the G7 could do to stop it. Officials said yesterday that future discussions about the plan were likely to be very sensitive.

In a joint statement yesterday the US and Thailand stressed the need for the latter to implement swiftly the IMF-imposed package of economic policies and banking reform. "Thailand's financial stabilisation is of great importance to the US and to South-east Asia as a whole," it said.

IMF backs Short call for corruption crackdown

Businessmen caught bribing foreign government officials to secure a deal will risk going to prison in future, Clare Short has told the annual meeting of the IMF and World Bank.

Diane Coyle reports.

The Secretary of State for International Development's comments reflected one of the

main themes of the gathering of finance ministers and central bankers following the publication of an IMF-World Bank report on the economic damage caused by corruption.

She welcomed the agreement by the rich OECD countries to end tax deductibility for bribes made in the course of doing business overseas and to make illegal the bribery of public officials abroad. Although this is already a criminal offence in the UK, Ms Short said: "As far as I know no one has ever been

charged with it. We will need to be more vigilant."

She emphasised that corruption involved two parties, the giver as well as the recipient of the bribe. "There is a strong new consensus that corruption damages development.

And there is no longer the perception that corruption is something on which rich countries can lecture poor ones."

Ms Short was addressing the delegates in her capacity as the UK's World Bank governor for the first time yesterday. The

Bank's development committee put the importance of the struggle against corruption at the top of its communique.

Ms Short said there had been strong support for this, although China and India had raised the difficulty of distinguishing corruption from differences between countries in business practices. She said: "There is always a question of how proven it can be. But if we all take it more seriously it will be a massive advance."

The communique began:

"Ministers agreed that corruption and weak governance undermine macroeconomic stability, private sector activity and sustainable development objectives."

Britain's emphasis on openness and transparency in economic policy won another unexpected success when a key IMF committee agreed with Gordon Brown's suggestion that the Fund should consider drawing up a code of good practice on openness for all member countries.

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Blue chips throw party as BT puts £3bn in shareholders' pockets

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN
STOCK
MARKET
REPORTER
OF THE YEAR

Blue chips surged to within dialling distance of their record high, helped in no small part by the largess of BT, the telephone giant still attracting criticism over its botched MCI takeover.

As part of the MCI package, BT, up 5.5p to 411p, handed out a 35p special dividend. It was paid yesterday, together with an increased 11.95p final. Through the two payments BT pumped more than £3bn into shareholders' accounts.

Most of the cash found its way into already overflowing institutional coffers, increasing the pressure on reluctant fund managers to join the stock market spree.

Although blue chips were in rousing form there was no evidence they have moved back into the market to any significant extent. Turnover

was again unexciting and although the market was buoyed by hopes of BT cash being returned to equities the gain was also due to a strong New York display and firm government stocks. Futures activity was also lively, showing at one time a 120-point premium to the cash market.

Footsie ended near its best of the day, up 51.9 points at 5,075.7. It was, as often in the past, very much a blue-chip party with second- and third-lineers limping behind.

Superstores led the charge, thanks to bullish comments from UBS J Sainsbury, teaming up with British Airways to offer cut price air fares in its latest bid at customer titillation, rose 18p to 465.5p; Tesco 16p to 475.5p; Asda 4.75p to 395.75p and Safeway 10.5p to 395.5p.

UBS lifted its Sainsbury

profits forecast £30m to £70m. The securities house believes the revival is coming through more quickly than anticipated.

Granada, the leisure group at last selling its computer side, put on 25.5p to 843.5p. It is due to meet 60 analysts today and there are hopes it may have more disposals on offer. The computer services business has been sold to its management for £89m, plus an £8m inter-company dividend.

Railtrack was back on the up line, 21p to 854p, another high. Associated British Foods, still thought to nurse predatory instincts towards Tate & Lyle, rose 13.5p to 564p. T&L sweetened 8.5p to 429p.

Laura Ashley, due to produce threebare figures on Thursday, jumped 10.5p to 64.5p in busy trading. The ac-

tion immediately provoked speculation of takeover action. A US strike is the favourite.

British Steel was thought to be due to US interest and Coats Viyella, the textile group, was up 60p to 205p. Chairman David Gare is leading a bid at 210p. He acquired a 36.2 per cent interest and commands 50.9 per cent. But there are murmurings of discontent. Several stockbrokers believe the price is far too low and are planning to press for an improved offer.

Intriguingly, glassmaker Pilkington was again heavily traded. It was the second-busiest share (after Shell) with Scaq putting turnover at more than 25 million with one 10.3 million deal going through at 150p. The price edged ahead 1.5p to 151.5p.

Chemical group British Vita improved 5p to 251.5p, with a clutch of investment houses producing favourable comments. Dresdner Kleinwort Benson believes the shares are cheap and looks for profits of £63m this year; fol-

lowed by £69m and then £75m. Alexander Workwear hardened 15p to 94p following an upbeat trading statement and Iastem, a computer group, jumped 30p to 205p. Chairman David Gare is leading a bid at 210p. He acquired a 36.2 per cent interest and commands 50.9 per cent. But there are murmurings of discontent. Several stockbrokers believe the price is far too low and are planning to press for an improved offer.

Sanderson Electronics, the software group, strengthened 9p to 92p after chairman Paul Thompson nudged his stake to 12.6 per cent. He picked up stock from the Singapore government's pension funds which are bailing out of smaller companies (Sanderson is capitalised at around £40m). Profits are expected to be £7.5m against £6.2m.

TAKING STOCK

Rentokil Initial, the business services group, plans a US investment roadshow next month. More than 22 per cent of its shares are held in the US. Meanwhile its Danish shareholder Sophie Berendsen is, in effect, handing out 32 per cent of Rentokil's capital to its shareholders through an investment trust which will be traded on the Copenhagen stock market. Rentokil rose 2p to 254.5p.

Hostilities have broken out at European Mining Finance. A meeting has been called to oust three directors, including chief executive Christopher Hall. Gordon

Montgomery and John Goode are put forward as replacements. But the action could extend beyond the present spat. Irish Marine Oil, Petrel and Hereward Mining are thought to be circling. EMF held at 20p.

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Parnevnik is happy to play the king of comedy

A sporting eccentric or a man at ease with himself and his game? Andy Farrell talks to one of the European Ryder Cup players who is expected to excel in Valderrama.

There is a considerable body of evidence that suggests Jesper Parnevnik is 100 per cent bark-ing mad. Walter Hagen may have gone around smelling the roses, but you get the impression this Swede would not only smell them and talk to them, but crush the petals into a juice to be taken at breakfast along with his volcanic dust and, maybe, a croissant.

Hagen's approach to the game was recalled in a recent column in this newspaper by Ken Jones. "The notion that games aren't necessarily fun is pathetic and, sadly, a feature of vicarious parental involvement," Jones wrote. Talk to Parnevnik about his life as a golfer and the word that crops up most often is fun.

This is something he certainly gets from his father. Bo Parnevnik is a famous comedian in Sweden, a cross between Mike Yarwood and Tommy Cooper. Exposed to the funny-ha side of life from an early age, Jesper has never been afraid to explore the funny peculiar aspect of the world either. After Bo took up golf, his son found the perfect outlet for his wondering and wandering mind.

The anecdotes are well chronicled. Parnevnik believes in reincarnation, meditates while the dawn breaks over the ocean near his home in South Palm Beach, Florida. He eats volcanic sand to cleanse his system, has had his blood analysed by radiation, uses stroboscopic glasses, has had his metal fillings replaced with ceramic ones to reduce mercury levels and has been pupil of the Russian philosopher who is Mikhail Gorbachev's mentor.

Of course, the most public demonstration that he is not your regular golfing pro comes in his retro, non-colour co-ordinated clothing and the cap with its upturned peak. Parnevnik was practising in Florida one winter and wanted to get a tan. He almost won his next tournament and the tradition has stuck. He planned to get a special Ryder Cup version made.

"Any image is a good one," Parnevnik says. "Maybe there isn't that much to write about in the golfing world. I don't mind at all. If anyone can have fun on my behalf I'm happy. All those things started with a small thing and they have been building up. It goes in cycles. You get really hooked on something and try it out, but a few months later you don't want to do anything at all. I've been quite normal the last couple of months."

Some of the stories have been perpetrated by his one-time coach, Ola Skipper. It was Skipper who got Parnevnik to visualise a shot by imagining green

Parnevnik "If anyone can pees in orbit have fun on my behalf, falling into a I'm happy"

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RUGBY LEAGUE

Farrell to lead new-look side

Great Britain have put the missing pieces into place for their Test series against Australia this autumn – to universal approval. *Dave Hodfield reports.*

The Great Britain side put any recent uncertainties on the back burner with the unveiling yesterday of a new kit, a new sponsor, a new member of the coaching staff and a captain who is not completely fresh to the job.

To nobody's surprise, Andy Farrell retains the job of leading Great Britain in the Test series against Australia in November. "I learned a lot captaining Great Britain in New Zealand last year and I'm still learning at Wigan, where I'm still only in my first full season as captain," Farrell said.

It is a mark of his status as a player that he seems to have been leading sides by example if not always by name forever, although he is still only 22.

"I won't have to ask anything of him," the Great Britain coach, Andy Goodway, said. "He will go out there and do what he always does by showing everyone else the way. Andy is a complete player and one of the best three in the world."

Goodway did not discuss suggestions that Farrell, a commanding loose forward for Wigan, might be needed at stand-off for Great Britain. "Stand-off is a key position and I will have to look at all the options," Goodway said.

Goodway also acquired the final member of his coaching team, the vastly experienced

Test player Daryl Powell, who has been appointed support coach for the series.

Powell's own Test career only ended last year in New Zealand, since when he has briefly sampled coaching with Keighley only to be drafted across to Leeds as part of the rescue package for the First Division club.

He commands great respect among the current generation of international players and Goodway sees his role as liaising between those players and management. "There will come times when they don't want me around and Daryl will be the ideal link," Goodway said.

Farrell and his team-mates will wear a re-designed kit bearing the imprint of British Gas.

After the problems the game has experienced recently in getting and keeping sponsors, the decision of a high-profile national company to come on board was greeted with delight at the announcement in Leeds.

Great Britain were without a sponsor on last year's loss-making tour and Super League has lost the backing of Stobes for next season, so the acquisition of British Gas – and the fact that two other companies were in the bidding – suggests to the League's chief executive, Maurice Lindsay, that there could be a knock-on effect that will benefit other areas of the game.

An official application has been made to the Australian Rugby League for the release of Gary Connolly and Jason Robinson for the Test series, while Australia have given a clue to their thinking by naming the Cronulla scrum-half Paul Green in their side to play New Zealand this Friday.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Dilfer dispatches Dolphins to keep Tampa Bay on top

Tampa Bay on Sunday won the local derby in Florida against Miami to remain one of three unbeaten teams in the National Football League. The Buccaneers beat the Dolphins 31-21 for their fourth victory. Denver and New England have also yet to lose.

Miami had won four of the previous five meetings against Tampa Bay but their defence had no answer to Trent Dilfer. The quarterback achieved four touchdown passes as the Buccaneers remained a game ahead of Green Bay Packers in the NFC Central Division.

Green Bay, Super Bowl champions, had to survive an intense second-half fightback by Minnesota to win 36-32. Brett Favre threw five touchdown passes for the Packers, who had led 31-17 at half-time.

One team who failed to stop a comeback was Indianapolis, who are without a win. The Colts surrendered a 26-point advantage to lose in Buffalo 37-35 as the Bills running back Antonio Smith rushed for 129 yards and three touchdowns.

Denver stayed on top of the NFC West with a 38-20 triumph over Cincinnati at Mile High Sta-

dium as John Elway had three scoring passes, while the New York Jets blocked a field goal attempt with Ray Micens picking up the ball and returning it 72 yards for a touchdown in a 23-22 home win over Oakland.

Baltimore won for the third time by overwhelming the Oilers in Tennessee 36-10. The Ravens quarterback, Vinny Testaverde, finished with 318 yards passing and three scoring passes.

New England remain undefeated with a 31-3 dismissal of Chicago at Foxboro Stadium. Drew Bledsoe's two touchdown throws and five Patriot sacks of quarterback Rick Mirer condemned the Bears to their fourth defeat. The Kansas City Chiefs intercepted Kerry Collins, of Carolina Panthers, four times and forced him to fumble once in an impressive 35-14 win at Ericsson Stadium.

Mike Ditka won his first game as the coach of New Orleans when the Saints humbled Detroit 35-17 in Louisiana. The St Louis Rams won their second game with a 13-3 triumph over New York Giants, while Seattle's team in the final minute to defeat San Diego 26-22 and San Francisco saw off Atlanta 34-7.

SPORTING DIGEST

American football

NFL: Tampa Bay 31, Carolina 14; Green Bay 39, Minnesota 32; New Orleans 35, Detroit 17; New England 31, Buffalo 22; Denver 38, Cincinnati 33; San Francisco 27, Atlanta 21; New York 23, Tampa Bay 21; Miami 21, Oakland 14.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE EASTERN DIVISION

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NY Jets 4-0-1 100 55 55

Baltimore 4-0-1 100 55 55

Indians 4-0-1 100 55 55

CENTRAL DIVISION

Baltimore 4-0-1 100 55 55

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Cincinnati 4-0-1 100 55 55

Tennessee 4-0-1 100 55 55

WESTERN DIVISION

Denver 4-0-1 100 55 55

Kansas City 4-0-1 100 55 55

Seattle 4-0-1 100 55 55

San Diego 4-0-1 100 55 55

NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE EASTERN DIVISION

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FOOTBALL

After 13 years Anderlecht are punished by Uefa

Anderlecht have finally paid the price for bribing the referee in their Uefa Cup semi-final against Nottingham Forest 13 years ago and will be banned from the next European competition they qualify for.

European football's governing body, which had previously said it could do nothing because the offence had been committed more than 10 years ago, imposed the ban yesterday.

Uefa has taken the action after admissions by Roger Vanden Stock, the chairman of the Belgian side, that the club, under his father's chairmanship, paid £20,000 to the Spanish referee after their 1984 semi-final.

Vanden Stock said his father had given Guruceta Muro, killed in a car crash in 1987, "a loan" the day after the second leg of the tie, which Anderlecht won 3-0 to wipe out Forest's 2-0 first-leg lead. The English club had scored a disallowed goal in the second leg, which television replays showed was legitimate.

Anderlecht are also facing legal action after several former Forest players announced last week that they are to start legal action against them.

Manchester United have sent a video to the Football Association which they claim shows Gary Pallister should not have been sent off against Bolton.

The England defender was dismissed by the referee Paul Durkin following a clash with Bolton's Nathan Blake in the first half of Saturday's goalless draw at the Reebok Stadium. It was Pallister's first red card in his eight years with the champions.

The FA has said it is still waiting for the referee's report. Durkin said: "I write my report from what I saw during the game and not after watching television."

Manchester City cut the asking price for Uwe Rosler to £1.3m yesterday in an attempt to set up a quick sale to Everton. The German striker has refused a new contract at Maine Road and can leave for nothing at the end of the season, prompting the drop in his valuation.

Michael Duberry, Chelsea's highly rated young defender, has been told his ankle is not broken, but he may still face a long lay-off if there is ligament damage.

Duberry was taken to hospital for X-rays on his left ankle which he hurt in an insignificant-looking challenge by Luis Boa Morte during Sunday's defeat by Arsenal.

Frank Sinclair, who dropped his shorts to celebrate scoring Chelsea's opening goal of the season at Coventry on 9 August, was fined £750 and censured by the FA yesterday.

Benfica are ready to appoint Bobby Robson as their new coach, according to reports in the Portuguese press yesterday.

The former England manager, currently general manager at Barcelona – is wanted to replace Manuel Jose, who was sacked on Sunday after refusing to resign following a series of poor results.

Bruce Grobbelaar has joined Sheffield Wednesday on a three-month deal after less than a week at Oxford United. The 39-year-old goalkeeper, charged by the FA last week with breaking betting rules a month after being acquitted of match-fixing, was signed by the Wednesday manager, David Pleat, because of a groin injury to Kevin Pressman in Saturday's 0-0 draw with Coventry.

Blackburn Rovers have released the Greek international Yorgos Donis after he failed to secure a first-team place, just over a year after arriving at Ewood Park on a free transfer. Donis made 22 appearances for Rovers last season, but found his chances limited and has agreed with Roy Hodgson, the Blackburn manager, to have his contract cancelled by mutual consent.

The Wimbledon striker Marcus Gayle has been released from hospital after he complained of chest pains and cramp following his team's 1-0 defeat by Crystal Palace on Saturday. Gayle was back doing "light exercise" yesterday and club officials are hopeful the problem was only a virus.

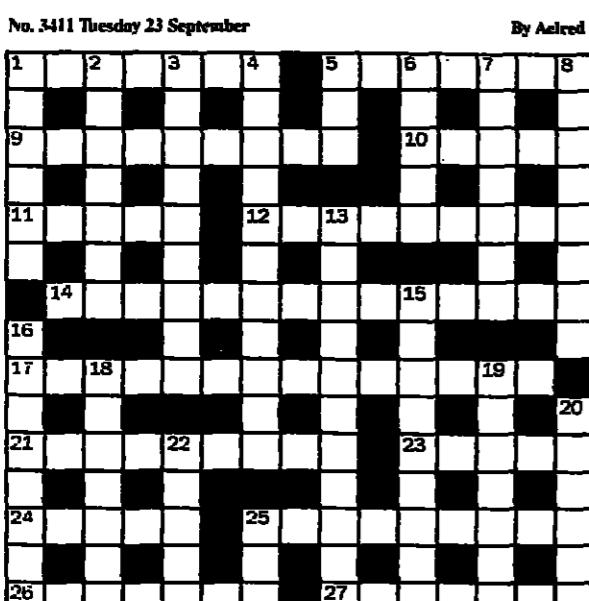
– Catherine Riley



Life's a beach: Though he might fancy himself as the new Depardieu, Eric Cantona was keeping his football eye on the Côte d'Azur on Sunday as he played under royal patronage. While Manchester United sat on top of the Premiership, their former presiding genius was turning out for Prince Albert of Monaco's team in the Pro Beach Soccer Tournament in Monte Carlo

Photograph: Clive Brunskill/Allsport

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Insult a fellow's appearance (7)
- 5 Try to find catch when hacking disarrangement policy (4-3)
- 9 Advanced as Nepal collapsed; this helps movement over water (9)
- 10 Crime for which cleric is headed (5)
- 11 Milk producer's awfully rude about head of Dairy (5)
- 12 American bird has baby on a river (9)
- 14 They can produce bags of smartness (7,7)
- 17 Gets a changed point which 4 actors should respond to (5,9)
- 21 Jack, it could be suggested, 5 is not even-handed? (3-3)
- 23 Magistrate is about at the 6 end of the day (5)
- 24 Rochmaninov, say, is short of 7 material (5)
- 25 Bootlicker not about to become unthinking (5-4)
- 26 Learn about New Testament in translation; it's illuminating (7)
- 27 European in the back of the boat is from the orient (7)
- 28 DOWN
- 1 A graduate joining coopers? You can count on it (6)
- 2 One providing money to secure old sink (7)
- 3 Work for Spanish and get on the same wavelength, which is apt (9)
- 4 A model of right thinking? (11)
- 5 Some quite extraordinary support for golfers (3)
- 6 Second horse is found in crude hut (5)
- 7 Good Queen eats fish as well (7)
- 8 Nobody holds nurses to be trash (8)
- 13 Possibly blaming peer for making attack ineffective (11)
- 15 Put data into computer, it is possibly a serious complaint (9)
- 16 Use opals corruptly to get support (8)
- 18 There's some grand irony calling this a kind of dog (7)
- 19 Former con changed what it is (3-4)
- 20 Lower clergyman rounds up those people commonly (6)
- 22 Fat old bees flying around (5)
- 25 Game's new unit of scoring (3)

RUGBY UNION

England take shape as Woodward cuts deep

Clive Woodward took an intriguing first step towards stamping his personality on England's national squad yesterday by naming an élite party for tomorrow's training run at Bisham Abbey. Chris Hewett looks at the reasoning behind the new coach's selections.

Now that is what you call a cull. Clive Woodward took a tree-feller's axe to England's ludicrously over-populated interim party yesterday, chopping the vast majority of the 77-strong swathe of humanity nominated by Don Rutherford, the Rugby Football Union's technical director, and leaving himself a choice band of 23 players with which to work. At this rate, he will soon be in a position to give his entire squad a lift to training.

Sensibly enough, Woodward has used his country's strong and generally successful Lions contingent as a foundation stone – all but four of his select high-fliers were in South Africa during the summer. Indeed, only three English Lions have not made the list: Nigel Redman, who ironically produced a world-class display before Woodward's very eyes in last Saturday's Bath-Brive match; Tony Underwood, the injury-prone Newcastle wing, and Tony Diprose, the Saracens captain.

Diprose has been named in an 11-strong subsidiary party of

"emerging players", which includes one or two comparative old-stagers who seem to have been emerging for years. John Mallett, Garath Archer and Martin Corry have, like Diprose, already been capped but the other seven represent the very best of England's untried, untested and uninhibited talent.

Woodward said yesterday that, to all intents and purposes, Phil de Glanville could still consider himself England captain and would be in charge of proceedings tomorrow. However, he added a significant rider by saying: "I will be naming the captain simultaneously with the team for the first Test of the season against Australia in November and that side will be picked only on form. Everybody will need to show me and my fellow selectors that they are good enough to occupy their positions during these intervening weeks."

At least the new coach is staying true to his long-held philosophy that small is beautiful when it comes to squad size. Woodward believes in exclusivity, in making the inner circle so difficult to break into that, when players finally find the key to the door, they arrive hardened by the experience. Certainly, it will now take a monumental effort for some of England's best-known performers to claw their way back into contention.

Underwood may well feature sooner rather than later, but Redman, Ben Clarke, Victor Ubogu, Darren Clarke, Chris Sheasby and Jon Sleighholme

are all on the outside looking in. So too is Andy Gomarsall, who started last season as England's first-choice scrum-half. The fall from grace can be steep and rapid, as the 23-year-old Wasp is discovering.

Will Greenwood, such an outstanding success with the Lions until his tour was cut-short by a life-threatening head injury during the match with Free State in Bloemfontein, is the only uncapped player on the élite list. With de Glanville back to something like his best and Jeremy Guscott nearing full fitness, the midfield selection for the Wallaby Test looks like a straightforward two from three.

The "emerging" list includes one youngster widely expected challenge for Test places before the season is out: Matt Perry, the Bath utility back, and Will Green, the Wasps prop. But the dark horse may turn out to be Andy Long, the Bath and England Under-21 front-rower rated by many good judges as the most talented hooker to emerge in this country in a generation.

ENGLAND ELITE SQUAD: Full-back: T. Batty (Bath). Wing: M. Johnson (Newcastle). A. Gomarsall (Bath). C. Sheasby (Wasps). Back-row: I. Mallett (Bath). C. Clarke (Leicester). P. De Glanville (Bath). D. Clarke (Bath). C. Ubogu (Leicester). A. Long (Bath). C. Sheasby (Wasps). M. Perry (Bath). M. Wood (Wasps).

Not
your rank
and file
pint.
CHARLES
WELLS
BOMBARDIER
PREMIUM BITTER

BREWED BY THE CHARLES WELLS FAMILY
BREWERY, BEDFORDSHIRE. EST. 1876.

GOLF

Martin may sue Ryder Cup committee

Miguel Martin, who was dropped from Europe's Ryder Cup team, says he may take legal action over his exclusion. Andy Farnell reports from Valderrama.

As the Concorde carrying Tom Kite's American Ryder Cup team landed at Malaga last night Miguel Angel Martin was also arriving at the airport. Martin, who had made the short journey from Madrid, is threatening to sue the Ryder Cup committee after they axed him from the European team and has so far declined an invitation to be at Valderrama.

"I do not know yet if I will be at the Ryder Cup," said the 35-year-old Spaniard who has been unable to play since July. He added: "You will have news tomorrow."

Lawyers for the European Tour consider Martin has no claim for compensation but the man replaced by Jose Maria Olazabal in Seve Ballesteros's team had earlier indicated he would not simply take the £3,500 expenses offered to all the other team members.

Despite these problems Ballesteros had the air yesterday of a man who is ready for the most important week of his golfing life. Far from being nervous about what might happen in the first Ryder Cup ever to be staged on Spanish soil – indeed Continental soil – Europe's captain insisted that he is simply excited about the prospect.

"When people are nervous it normally means they don't have confidence," said Ballesteros, lifting a glass to show that his hand was not shaking. "This is not the case with me. Everything is under control, and I have tremendous confidence not just in myself, but in the team as well."

On his arrival at Valderrama, the sight of Nick Faldo practising hard was a welcome sight for the European team captain. Faldo has not played for two weeks and travelled ahead of the rest of the team, who flew in from London this afternoon.

Ballesteros, who in handing a wild card to Faldo, praised him as the man whom he would bet his life on playing the last hole, said: "Nick has shown dedication over many years, and it's nice to see he is still so keen."

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